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THE ROMAN CHURCH AT THE END OF THE SECOND CENTURY

THE EPISCOPATE OF VICTOR, THE LATINIZATION OF
THE ROMAN CHURCH, THE EASTER CONTROVERSY,
CONSOLIDATION OF POWER AND DOCTRINAL
DEVELOPMENT, THE CATACOMB OF CALLISTUS

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DURING the latter part of the second century Irenaeus of Lyons, at the beginning of his treatise "Against All Heresies," did not hesitate to state with great emphasis that Christianity had fully succeeded in keeping intact the original Christian faith, in safeguarding the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, and in maintaining the unity of belief and of sacramental practice throughout all the churches scattered in the Roman Empire.¹ One might easily remark that the very treatise which Irenaeus had set himself to write offered clear evidence that the Christian unity so emphatically affirmed by him did not really exist. Far from being united, Christianity was rent by serious doctrinal and disciplinary conflicts. Evidently Irenaeus was speaking of the oneness of the Christian faith without taking into account the divergent beliefs and practices of those groups which had been cut off from the communion of the Great Church. So understood his assumption was true: by the end of the second century the *καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία* did possess unity of essential belief and even a certain degree of uniformity in its organization and practice. How such a unity had been achieved

¹ Adv. Haer., i. 10, 2.

is one of the most important problems in the history of early Christianity.²

Christianity in its process of expansion appropriated from many environments and peoples a great variety of moral and doctrinal elements, of practices and popular traditions, of spiritual tendencies and religious experiences. Through this process of assimilation Christianity enriched its spiritual content and the church, which originally in the thought of its primitive members was but a temporary organization, a simple shelter for those who were to be saved in the imminent parousia, assumed gradually and consistently the character of a permanent organization. All kinds of doctrinal, religious, social, and political problems which in the beginning appeared of no importance to the Christians, and which could be overlooked or dealt with summarily, since all of them would be solved *en bloc* and forever by the parousia, began one by one to urge themselves upon the church and to come within its sphere of thought and influence.

These problems did not make their appearance abruptly or everywhere simultaneously among the Christian churches; they arose and found expression at different times and in different places, according to the local circumstances and to the

² B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 1924, pp. 498 f., has called attention to the importance of this problem in connection with the diffusion and canonization of the books of the New Testament: "There is a problem in early Church history which few historians have frankly faced, and which those who have tried to date the books of the New Testament in an unreal abstraction from their environment in history have strangely felt themselves absolved from even raising. How are we to account for that broad general consensus on the main lines of belief and practice to be found, amid much local diversity, throughout the loose federation of communities known as the Catholic Church which appears all over the Roman Empire by the end of the second century?" After a long enumeration of the questions which agitated the Christian communities, and on which heresies and schisms arose, Streeter concludes: "It was the acceptance by the leading Churches at an early date of an authoritative Life of Christ, interpreted in the light of the great Epistles of Paul, that made it possible for some kind of unity in the direction of doctrinal development to be preserved." Undoubtedly it was so; it is obvious, however, that the common acceptance of a small body of authoritative literature, which was itself open to the most divergent interpretations, marks only the first step in circumscribing the tradition, and that it itself presupposes an instrument capable of using this tradition and fixing its interpretation for the purpose of securing the unity of doctrinal development. For such an instrument we must turn to the organization, since Christianity was from the beginning not a mere doctrine but also a church.

degree of intensity in the spiritual life of the various Christian communities. A different appreciation of the implications of the fundamental Christian beliefs provoked almost everywhere personal and group conflicts and awakened opposing tendencies and discordant traditions. Local and divergent solutions of the same problems whether of doctrine or of practice were adopted in various places in the name of the same Christian spirit and of the same apostolic tradition. On the other hand, the principle of the necessary unity of faith and practice was implicit in the Christian consciousness of possessing the sole and exclusive way of salvation. The need of uniform solutions was felt, and to satisfy this need an organization adequate to the task was gradually developed. It was through organization that Christianity saved the doctrinal tradition by creating in time a definite system of relations among the churches, which made it possible to achieve and to maintain for a long time a striking fundamental unity.

From the point of view of the study of this historical process, the history of the Church of Rome of the first three centuries has a unique importance. In that period, for many and various reasons, the Christian community of Rome was not only one of the largest, but also was highly representative of the various currents of thought, tradition, and practice of the whole Christian church. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Church of Rome became very early the great laboratory of Christian and ecclesiastical policy and that it contributed more than any other church to the practical solution of the most urgent problems and to the defeat of the internal forces which were leading Christianity to a complete disintegration.³ The crucial period of the history of the Roman Church of pre-constantinian times, the period which marks the culmination of its early development, is to be found in the years which run from the last quarter of the second century to the first decades of the

³ I have outlined the main characteristics of the internal development of the Church of Rome in the early period, and the rise of the monarchical episcopate in that church, in three other publications (*Il Problema della Chiesa Latina in Roma*, Rome, 1922; *La Successione episcopale in Roma e gli albori del Primato*, Rome, 1922; 'La primitiva comunità cristiana di Roma e l'Epistola ai Romani,' *Ricerche Religiose*, Rome, May-July 1925), of which the present study is the continuation.

NOTE
third. In this period the Church of Rome emerged from a long crisis to a new life, the most important and most significant features of which may be summarized as follows:

1. The monarchical form of the Roman episcopate overcame the last resistance of the local opposition, and at the same time a vigorous attempt was made to enforce within the Roman Christian community the principle of unity of faith and of doctrine and of uniformity in discipline and liturgical practices.

2. For the first time clear evidence appears that the Church of Rome did not hesitate to impose on other churches its own traditions, assuming thus the right to represent the genuine and authoritative tradition of Christianity.

3. The Church of Rome, in its determined effort to achieve internal unity and to gain cohesion, tried to overcome all kinds of divisive doctrinal and practical divergences by recourse not so much to theological debate and philosophical speculation as to disciplinary measures, which increased the power of its hierarchical organization and led gradually to the elimination of all groups and tendencies that could not be conquered or assimilated.

4. A general reconstruction of the system of ecclesiastical administration of the Roman Church took place in that period. Through favorable circumstances the Christian community as such acquired even the possession of cemeteries and meeting-places for the cult.

5. And finally, in this period the Church of Rome, which up to that time had the aspect of a community of Greek speech and traditions, gradually began to assume the character of a Latin church, different in many ways from the churches which had been established in the countries of the eastern Mediterranean basin.

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The Latinization of the Roman Church is a fact of capital importance in the history of Christianity, and it is surprising that historians have paid little attention to the process out of which this church finally emerged as a Latin church.

The last decades of the second century and the first years of the third are a turning-point in the history of Roman policy and

institutions, just as they mark the beginning of a new period in the history of the Church of Rome.

The Antonine tradition, which through the system of adoption in the imperial succession had, at least in appearance, conciliated the seemingly irreconcilable principles of the *Romana libertas* and of the *imperium*, came to an end. Under the Severi the equestrian class and the provincial aristocracy were the object of great favors and acquired new distinction at the expense of the old Roman senatorial class. Many traditions which reserved to Romans or Italians the exclusive right to hold certain offices either in the army or in the administration were abolished; the provincials were gradually lifted to the level of the Romans and finally Roman citizenship was granted to all free men in the empire.⁴

The conception itself of the nature of the imperial authority began to undergo a gradual transformation, and the growth of the military and economic importance of the provinces and the realization of their vital function in the life of the empire fostered and made more requisite a new juridical development which aimed to stabilize the equilibrium of the Roman régime on a broader basis than the *jus* of the Quirites.⁵ At the same

⁴ To the old, but in many points still useful, book of Ceuleneer (*Essai sur la vie et le règne de Septime Sévère*, Bruxelles, 1880) have now been added the recent works of Platnauer (*The Life and Reign of Septimius Severus*, Oxford, 1918) and J. Hasabroek (*Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Septimius Severus*, Heidelberg, 1921), which reduce to more modest proportions the traditional opinion that Severus "was the principal author of the decline of the Roman Empire" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. v, at the end), and soften even the general assumption that Severus "planted the despotism of the East in the soil of the West" (Domaszewski, *Gesch. d. röm. Reiches*, II, p. 262). It is undeniable, however, that Septimius's reign marks a turning point in the history of the empire and of Roman institutions.

⁵ On the transformation of the conception of the Imperium see the recent work of O. T. Schultz (*Vom Prinzipat zum Dominat*, Paderborn, 1919, pp. 21 ff.). The legislation of Severus is well analyzed by Ceuleneer (pp. 271-289) and by Platnauer (pp. 158-213). Platnauer remarks: "In general we notice the markedly milder character of the laws now framed; the growing feeling that human life is precious, as such, leads to a legislative humanitarianism, the more valuable in that it does not seem to degenerate into sentimentality" (p. 181). It is not surprising that the Roman juridical schools were willing to follow this new path. Roman jurisprudence ceased to be a closed field reserved to the followers of the narrow Quiritarian tradition. The new school which opposed the old-fashioned formalism could not ignore the new elements which had gained so much im-

time the tendency toward a more comprehensive religious syncretism increased in intensity, pervading even the fundamental political and religious conceptions of the Roman official cults, and the door was opened wide to the infiltration of new oriental and foreign traditions and practices which all worked together for the de-romanization of Rome and of Roman institutions.

A great factor in this process of transformation of the juridical, social, and religious life of the empire was the Roman population itself, a population cosmopolitan as well by origin as in character. All the provinces and all the cities were represented in Rome by immigrant groups and by their descendants, and all of them had imported and kept in Rome their traditions, their gods, their cults, and their associations. Even the Roman aristocracy had gradually filled its ranks with provincials who by the favor of the emperors had climbed up to the senatorial class, and through marriages and adoptions had often inherited the names and estates of the most famous ancient republican families, which for the most part had one after another come to an end.⁶ The intense vital process of action and reaction between the capital and the provinces affected deeply the political, religious, and social life of Rome and of its cosmopolitan population.

Turning to the history of the Church of Rome during the same period the historian cannot fail to be impressed by the

portance in the social, economic, and political life of the empire. The period from Marcus Aurelius to the end of the Severan dynasty is the golden age of classical jurisprudence, and it is interesting to notice that many of the greatest jurists who most contributed to its development were men of provincial birth and of broad training. Such were Salvius Julianus, an African from Hadrumetum; Cervidius Scevola, a Greek; Aemilius Papinianus, probably an oriental related to Julia Domna; Domitius Ulpianus, who derived his origin from Tyre in Phoenicia; and, perhaps the greatest of all, Julius Paulus, who also is said to have been of Eastern origin.

⁶ Nothing is more instructive as a sign of the gradual transformation of Roman institutions than to follow the history of the Roman senate and of its membership. To the well-known works of Bloch and Lécirvain (*Bibliot. des Écoles Françaises d' Athènes et de Rome*, 39, 52) a guide of inestimable value for the first three centuries of the empire has been added by G. Lully (*De Senatorum Romanorum Patria*, Rome, 1918.) From Augustus to the Severi the number of provincial senators goes on increasing, and though the Italici formed always the largest group, most of the provinces were well represented (p. 251).

importance possessed also in the history of the Christian community by the same fact that the population of Rome, and therefore of the Christian community itself, comprised groups representing the various races and the various provinces of the empire. During the first two centuries the eastern element was preponderant, both in numbers and influence, in the Roman Christian community. Easterners had formed the bulk of the Roman Church from the beginning, and in the cosmopolitan environment of the capital Christianity had spread chiefly among that part of the population which by either birth or descent represented eastern races and traditions. At the same time the constant influx of eastern immigration continued to bring to Rome from the various Christian centres of the East individuals and groups which, while strengthening the ranks of the community, yet introduced into it the various peculiar practices and traditions developed by Christianity in the churches of Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt. Very soon teachers of heresies and heads of schools representing special interpretations of the Christian tradition or new and striking messages to Christian spirituality flocked to Rome, with the result of introducing new divisions and provoking new conflicts.

About the end of the second century the Christian community of Rome was far from presenting the appearance of a strong organization destined to survive; on the contrary it seemed in process of complete disintegration. The main problem with which the Church of Rome was then confronted — a problem of the greatest importance on account of its far-reaching implications — was whether Christianity was to be a conglomeration of churches, schools, and sects, widely differing in doctrinal tenets and in liturgical practices but all coming under the general denomination of "the Christian Church," or whether it was to form a compact body of believers governed by the strict law of doctrinal unity and of practical uniformity. In other words the great problem of Christian unity came to be formulated in a striking way and to demand an immediate solution within the Christian community of Rome, which its narrow boundaries did not make less truly representative of the whole of Christianity.

The adoption of an inclusive policy of mutual toleration might not have appeared strange or impracticable to men living in an environment where syncretistic religious and philosophical views were predominant, and where the coëxistence and even the coördination of disparate religious conceptions seemed to satisfy both the masses and the thinkers in spite of all that could be and actually was illogical and inconsistent in such a situation. But on the other hand Christianity could not fail to apply to the dissidents within its own organization the same principle of intolerance and exclusion which it applied to all other religions. Its conception on the one hand,⁷ inherited from Judaism, of a revealed religion and its sacramental doctrine and practice on the other, forbade Christianity to adopt the inconsistent and often merely external syncretism of the heathen religions.

Christianity was not only a religion of individual salvation through faith and sacraments. It had an ethical and spiritual content which in its realization could not fail to affect not merely the individual conscience but also the whole social and political life of human society. Christianity, therefore, had standards of belief and of conduct for the community, and as a consequence was bound to have an organization to formulate and to enforce these standards. Its claim to universality was more comprehensive and more real than that of the mystery-religions, which lacked an ethical teaching of their own, and which by virtue of their compromise with the exigencies of the religious-political principles of Rome could not, and did not, attempt to invade the special domain of the state religion. If Christianity had been a mere religion of individual salvation, nothing could have prevented its undergoing the same fate as the mystery-religions and being absorbed by the general syncretism of contemporary religious and philosophical thought. But Christianity was an organization, a Church, and the problem of its unity was identical with that of its uniqueness.

This problem of the unity of Christianity was thus by force of circumstances more urgently felt in Rome than elsewhere,

⁷ G. F. Moore, 'The Rise of Normative Judaism,' *Harvard Theological Review*, 1925, pp. 27, 37 f.

and at the end of the second century had become the chief and vital problem of the Roman Church. The various shades of Christian thought and all the varieties of disciplinary and liturgical tradition which could be found in the various centres of Christian life were represented in Rome, and all of them were engaged in a deadly struggle to overcome one another and become the official doctrine or the official practice of the whole community. But the very fact of the variety and complexity of the principles involved in such a struggle obliged the Roman Church to turn for a solution not primarily to endless theological discussions and to philosophical elaborations, but rather to disciplinary measures. The problem of unity in Rome came to be considered primarily as a problem of organization; it was the simplest way, and the only practical one, of emergence from the impasse. Everything else came thus to be subordinated to the exigencies of the organization, and in the name of the rights of the organization all compromise with tendencies and doctrines which would have weakened its cohesion or diminished its sacramental power or attacked its hierarchical constitution was consistently refused.

But this situation, which at that period was responsible for all the troubles of the Roman Church, was also the instrumentality through which the path to leadership and supremacy was opened to the Roman community and to its bishops. The work of unification of the Christian church as a whole began within the circle of the Roman community, and it was energetically carried on and achieved there earlier than elsewhere, securing thus to the Roman Church an historical tradition to which appeal was made when the time came to claim universal validity for a new theological tradition of divine right to leadership and supremacy.

It has always been difficult to bring under one rule and to govern groups and bodies divergent in beliefs and practices when the governing power has no other resources than its own spiritual and moral authority. No wonder, therefore, that in the Roman community the monarchical form of the episcopate was somewhat slow in assuming a definite aspect and in becoming the primary factor of organization. The difficulties to be over-

come were greater than elsewhere; the struggle was harder and lasted longer.

The important Christian communities of the East, such as Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna, and even Alexandria, appear to have reached a strong internal organization earlier than the community of Rome. The reason is obvious. In those centres, even in those which had a mixed population, gentile Christianity was represented by the local native element of the population. New-comers, either individuals or groups, were easily absorbed, or at least easily controlled, by the organization, which represented the authoritative local tradition of the Christian church. From the beginning the Christian communities of the East had more homogeneity in their membership and more unity in their organization than the Roman community. This and other reasons made possible in the East an early rise of the monarchical episcopate.

Moreover, in those centres hellenistic Christianity was at home; it had assumed the character of a local product, of a local elaboration, and could not be considered as a foreign importation. In Rome on the contrary, up to the middle of the second century, Christianity was still a foreign religion, and was so considered and dealt with by the government and by the Roman people. In a city which in spite of its cosmopolitan population and of the hellenistic and oriental infiltrations was still the representative of the Latin spirit and of the Latin traditions, Christianity was the religion of many groups of various foreign origins, using in their cult the Greek language and led by bishops who often were themselves of Eastern origin, or by teachers and theologians who had but recently come from Antioch, Asia Minor, or Egypt.

From the beginning hellenistic Christianity had laid stress upon both the doctrinal and the disciplinary factors of its religious life; teaching and organization went hand in hand as two inseparable parts of the same whole. But in spite of the emphasis put upon the organization, the hellenistic churches were soon affected by that peculiar hellenistic individualism which in the past had prevented the formation of a Greek empire from the city-states. They were also affected by the char-

acteristic spiritual and intellectual curiosity of the race, so fond of analysis and of theories leading to discussion and disagreement, to quarrels and schisms. To an organization which claimed from the beginning a universal value, but which was still in the period of infancy and surrounded by mortal enemies, individualism and intellectual curiosity could not fail to become a serious danger. If Christianity had been left entirely under the control of the hellenistic spirit, it would undoubtedly have developed into numberless independent city-churches widely different in doctrinal tenets and in spiritual and religious content. In other words the hellenistic churches, in spite of the fact that each one of them had more internal homogeneity and a centralized government, would have been unable to solve the difficult problem of the juridical coördination of the churches, which alone could secure the unity of Christianity as a whole.

The struggle came first in Rome. There were heretics and dissidents in the Christian centres of the East, but on the one hand the existence of strongly centralized ecclesiastical governments in those communities made it more difficult for them to compete successfully with the traditional local authority; on the other hand the lure of Rome, and the knowledge of the great possibilities open there among the cosmopolitan population, were enough to persuade every leader of new movements, either doctrinal or practical, to move his headquarters to Rome and to make of the Roman community the chosen ground of active propaganda.

No doubt the governing body which in Rome represented the traditional authority did not remain altogether indifferent or passive to these invasions. But its power was questioned and its authority freely challenged by individuals and groups who claimed either a total or a partial autonomy, who urged for recognition, and when it was denied were ready to reject the claims of the bishop as the supreme head of the community. Moreover, this was not a meaningless conflict of idle thinkers or a sequel to the skirmishes of fanatical rhetoricians. It was, on the contrary, the crisis of growth of laborious Christian thought, which was trying to find its way in the task of absorbing all those elements of philosophical speculation which Christianity needed in order to present itself to the thinking classes

as a consistent system of religious truth. At that stage, however, it was difficult to discern at the start all the possible implications of principles and theories; such a task could be accomplished only through a long period of development during which hesitations and mistakes were unavoidable. No wonder, therefore, that the policy of those who governed the Christian community of Rome during the first centuries was often uncertain and included hesitations and revisions. It was possible in Rome for schools and groups to prosper and to spread their peculiar doctrines almost unhindered by the representatives of the traditional authority to whom fell the enormous task of guiding, supervising, and controlling the vital and spontaneous outburst of intellectual elaboration of Christian beliefs into a Christian doctrine.

In spite of the difficulties and of the unavoidable hesitations, the process of eliminating doctrines which were essentially repugnant to the fundamental premises of the Christian system of salvation, and which were obviously in contrast with the teaching of the accepted body of apostolic literature, had to a certain extent been carried on in the Roman community. It had contributed to the formulation of a Symbol of faith which in its original simplicity sufficed to attain a certain fundamental unity of belief among those who were admitted to the baptismal initiation.⁸ The two extreme groups which during the

⁸ McGiffert, *The Apostles' Creed*, New York, 1905, has endeavored to prove that "the Old Roman Symbol arose as a protest against error" (p. 12), "and not as a positive statement of the Christian faith framed quite independently of existing errors and with a primarily evangelistic or missionary purpose" (p. 12, against the theory of Harnack and Kattenbusch). The evidence for his theory given by McGiffert (pp. 106-174) is very remarkable and for several points quite conclusive. There is no doubt that the inclusion of or the emphasis upon some of the articles of the symbol must have been suggested by reaction against heretical Marcionite teaching, but it does not seem entirely safe to conclude that the symbol was a mere protest and not a positive statement of the essentials of the Christian faith of the time, merely because certain omissions make it appear inadequate to supply a complete standard of orthodoxy. If the symbol was formulated not long after the middle of the second century, as McGiffert holds, it may be said that it contained everything which at that stage of doctrinal elaboration could be considered essential to the Christian profession of faith. To be sure, the Roman presbyters of the second century must have been aware that their creed was far from being an exhaustive summary of their beliefs, and have supplemented its deficiencies in their catechetical instruction; but it would be difficult to prove that in their apprehension the creed did not contain the essential points acceptance of which made

last decades of the second century stood as the great rivals of the traditional Roman Church, the Gnostics and the Marcionites, had been cut off from the communion of the Great Church. Their influence, however, was very strong, and their teaching appealed to people of culture and of vivid imagination. But besides these extreme formulations, there were to be found within the Roman community many teachers and groups who gave peculiar interpretations to one point or another of the common beliefs, or who denied one or another of the common traditions; upon these it was more difficult to pass judgment, but they all provoked discussions and animosities, bred divisions and conflicts, and so kept the whole community in a turmoil.

In addition there were groups not characterized by doctrinal divergences but by different traditions in matter of discipline and of liturgical practice. Such was for instance the group of the Asiatics and their followers who observed fast-days and celebrated Easter on a different date from the rest of the community.⁹ The situation confronting a Roman bishop during the second half of the second century was a very serious one. Powerful groups which called themselves Christian, such as the Marcionites, were assuming the form of independent churches with their own ritual and their own hierarchy; other groups formed schools or *didaskaleioi* which attracted people of culture and claimed also alone to possess the Christian

a man a Christian, namely, God the Father and Creator; Jesus the Son of God; Jesus the man who really lived on earth and suffered death; Jesus the judge to come; the Spirit; and the resurrection of the flesh. That "Christ had brought a knowledge of God's will and truth, that he was the Saviour and that he had died for our sins or for us" (p. 121) were in a general way beliefs implicitly contained in the notions of Jesus as *God, Man, and Judge*. To describe these truths more explicitly would have required a theological formulation for which the time was not yet ripe. As De Faye remarks, "Les chrétiens [of the second century] ont des croyances bien arrêtées, mais ces croyances ne sont pas encore cristallisées en formules claires et précises. Ainsi ils sont tous monothéistes. Ils déclarent que le plus grand bienfait que leur a procuré la foi au Christ, c'est de savoir enfin qu'il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu, Créateur du ciel et de la terre. Ne leur demandez pas à ces chrétiens des précisions sur la nature du Christ ou sur son oeuvre rédemptrice" (Origène, I. Sa biographie et ses écrits, Paris, 1923, p. v).

⁹ The Easter controversy of the second century has been often discussed since the 18th century. See the bibliography up to 1906 in Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, I, p. 133, n. 1, and for the most recent publications, Krüger, *Harvard Theological Review*, January, 1921, pp. 348-349.

truth.¹⁰ Within his own community, the bishop was hindered by doctrinal divergences, by conflicting liturgical practices, by personal rivalries and ambitions ready at any moment to give rise to new schism and to new independent groups. And beyond all this, was the hatred of the populace, the contempt of the learned classes, and the open persecution by the government.

Bishop Anicetus (154-166/7), who was a Syrian by origin and who may have been influenced by the strictly monarchical traditions of the episcopate of Antioch, tried to curb some of the groups and made an effort to introduce uniformity of liturgical practice. He called upon the Asiatic group of the Roman community to abandon their peculiar custom of fasting and of celebrating Easter on a different date. His demand was met with a refusal, and the Asiatics appealed for support to the churches of Asia Minor whose tradition they were following. The venerable bishop of Smyrna, Polycarp, according to the narrative of Irenaeus,

went to Rome; there were between him and Anicetus other minor divergencies which were easily settled; but on this point they did not come to a breach. Anicetus could not persuade Polycarp . . . and Polycarp could not persuade Anicetus. . . . They remained in peace, and in the church Anicetus out of deference permitted Polycarp to celebrate the eucharist.

In other words, Anicetus gave up his attempt to impose the Roman custom on the Asiatics of his church.

The importance of this episode as described by Irenaeus and its far-reaching implications seem to me not to have been fully realized by historians, who have paid little attention to the presence of an Asiatic group in Rome and have considered this controversy as a direct quarrel between the bishop of Rome and the bishop of Smyrna. The following passage of Irenaeus,

¹⁰ De Faye (Origène, p. iv,) affirms that "jusqu'à la fin du II^e siècle la plus part des écoles gnostiques font encore partie de l'Église." This assumption is rather misleading, since at that time the Gnostic groups already formed separate bodies with their own ritual practices, and as such they were not part of the church, that is to say of the organization, though they still assumed to be within the circle of Christianity. It is true, however, that Gnosticism as a religion separated from Christianity only in the third century. See also E. Buonaiuti, *Gnostic Fragments*, 1924, pp. 1-4.

quoted by Eusebius, implies the existence of such a group in the Roman community:

The presbyters before Soter who presided over the church which thou governest today, we mean Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, Xystus, neither kept [the Asiatic custom] themselves nor imposed [it] on those with them. Nevertheless, not observing [it] themselves, they maintained peace with those who came to them from the communities which observed [it]. But to observe [it] was more in contrast with those who did not observe [it]. None, however, was ever cast out on account of this peculiarity, but the presbyters before thee, though they did not observe [it], sent the eucharist to those from the communities who observed [it].¹¹

It is obvious that in this passage of his letter to bishop Victor, Irenaeus wished to emphasize the tolerant attitude of his predecessors, who did not themselves observe the Asiatic custom but did not prevent others from doing so.¹²

Who were these other Christians whom the Roman bishops allowed to follow the Asiatic custom? "Those who came to Rome from the communities where that peculiar tradition was followed." The common interpretation given to these words of Irenaeus assumes that they were casual visitors from the churches of Asia Minor. But under that view the significant remark made by Irenaeus that "to observe the Asiatic custom was more in contrast with those who did not observe it," that is to say, that the different observance in the same place made the contrast more striking, would remain without justification. A casual visitor, or even a group of visitors, coming to Rome for a short time during the Easter celebration, could not be the cause of surprise and resentment in the Roman community, unless we also suppose that these groups of visitors were so large that, being accompanied by presbyters of their

¹¹ H. E., v. 24, 14.

¹² οὔτε αὐτοὶ ἐτήρησαν οὔτε τοῖς μετ' αὐτῶν ἐπέτρεπον, καὶ οὐδὲν ἔλαττον αὐτοὶ μὴ τηροῦντες εἰρήνευον τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν παροικιῶν ἐν αἷς ἐτηρεῖτο, ἐρχομένοις πρὸς αὐτοὺς· καίτοι μᾶλλον ἐναντίον ἦν τὸ τηρεῖν τοῖς μὴ τηροῦσιν. καὶ οὐδέποτε διὰ τὸ εἶδος τοῦτο ἀπεβλήθησαν τινες, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ μὴ τηροῦντες οἱ πρὸ σοῦ πρεσβύτεροι τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν παροικιῶν τηροῦσιν ἐπέμπον εὐχαριστίαν. The first sentence leaves room for ambiguity. A different translation is offered: 'They did not observe it themselves and did not permit [to do so] those who were with them.' This seems to me unacceptable because it would mean that the Roman bishops did not allow any Christian in Rome to follow the Asiatic custom, while Irenaeus wishes to emphasize the opposite, namely, that they did permit this procedure.

own, they could hold a celebration apart. In other words, we must suppose a regular pilgrimage to Rome such as we may find today. Moreover, to satisfy this interpretation, these visits of large groups of Asiatics at Easter-tide must have been regularly repeated for half a century, since in this connection Irenaeus mentions all the bishops from Anicetus to Soter as having all kept peace with the supposed visitors. All this is obviously absurd.

But a clear confirmation of my assumption that the Asiatics were not casual visitors but a large group settled in Rome, probably in the early second century, may be found in the last sentence of the passage quoted above: "the presbyters before thee, though not observing the Asiatic custom, sent the eucharist to those from the communities who observed it." These words have puzzled all the commentators. The ancient interpretation that "the presbyters of Rome sent the eucharist to other parishes where the paschal festival was observed on the fourteenth of the month," may be summarily dismissed: there is no mention of such a custom and there were no Christian communities near Rome observing the Asiatic custom to whom the eucharist could be sent.¹³ It remains to understand that the eucharist was sent to the supposed casual visitors. But, as McGiffert remarks, "it is difficult to understand why Irenaeus should speak of sending the eucharist to persons who observed the fourteenth, instead of merely mentioning the fact that the Roman Church communed with them. In the face of the difficulties on both sides it must be admitted that neither of the interpretations mentioned can be insisted upon."¹⁴ Quite right; but all difficulty disappears if we admit that the eucharist was sent not to individual casual visitors but to a group of Asiatics settled in Rome who held the custom of their churches of origin, and who therefore had their liturgical celebration apart

¹³ Valesius, quoted by McGiffert in his translation of Eusebius. McGiffert remarks: "It must be said that, so far as we are able to ascertain, only the Churches of Asia observed the fourteenth day at that early date, and it is difficult to imagine that the presbyters of Rome had been in the habit of sending the eucharist all the way from Rome to Asia Minor."

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 244, n. 20.

on a different date from the rest. We know that it was an ancient custom in the Church of Rome that the bishop sent a fragment of the eucharistic bread consecrated by him to the presbyters who presided over the meetings in the various districts of the city. Of such a custom we have abundant evidence in the following centuries; it was the rite of the *fermentum* sent from the episcopal mass to the presbyters of the *tituli* to be mixed for their own consecration.¹⁵

This ancient custom might well have been established during the second century, and this passage of Irenaeus so interpreted would then be the oldest witness to its existence in the Church of Rome. This rite of the *fermentum*, according to the classical interpretation that obtained to the end, "was a symbol of the unity of the community and of the subordination of the presbyters to the bishop, *ut se a nostra communione separatos non judicent*." It must have been established in a period when it was necessary in the Roman Church to have an external sign of this unity, that is to say in a period in which the existence of so many groups claiming independence from the bishop could mislead simple believers and foster the ambitions of unscrupulous presbyters. The second half of the second century was exactly a time in which such a measure was most needed. When the monarchical rights of the bishop were challenged by the reluctant groups, the sending of the *fermentum* was, as it were, the sacramental expression of the unity of the community and of the subjection of all the groups to the bishop. That the eucharist was chosen for this purpose was in harmony with the Christian tradition as formulated by Ignatius: "Be careful to

¹⁵ In the *Liber Pontificalis* it is said that Pope Melchiades "fecit ut oblationes consecratae per ecclesias ex consecratu episcopi dirigerentur, quod declaratur fermentum" (ed. Duchesne, I, p. 169). Pope Siricius (384-399) made this rule more specific (*ibid.*, I, p. 216). The last mention of the *fermentum* is in the Epistle of Innocent I (401-417) to the bishop of Gubbio: "De fermento vero, quod die dominica per titulos mittimus, superflue nos consulere voluistis, cum omnes ecclesiae nostrae intra civitatem sint constitutae, quarum presbyteri, quia die ipsa propter plebem sibi creditam nobiscum convenire non possunt, idcirco fermentum a nobis confectum per acolytos accipiunt, ut se a nostra communione, maxime illa die, separatos non judicent" (Migne, *Patr. Lat.* XX, col. 556). Note the last sentence. On the 'fermentum' see Cabrol et Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de Liturgie*, V, col. 1371.

use one eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for union with his blood, one altar, as there is one bishop with the presbyters." ¹⁶

But that the Asiatics in Rome were not casual visitors but formed a group within the Christian community is evident also from other sources than the narrative of Eusebius and the letter of Irenaeus to Victor. Eusebius mentions that in Victor's time a certain Blastus, a presbyter of the church, became the leader of a schismatic group in Rome and that against him the same Irenaeus wrote an epistle. But Eusebius does not specify the reason of Blastus's schism. Fortunately this is mentioned in another document, Pseudo-Tertullian, *Adversus omnes haereses*. This is found appended to Tertullian's treatise *De praescriptione*, and might be the so-called "Syntagma" of Hippolytus, or a summary of it. There we read that Blastus "wished to introduce Judaism in disguise; for he said that Easter ought not to be observed otherwise than according to the law of Moses on the fourteenth of the month." ¹⁷ These words dispel all doubt: the Asiatic group of Rome kept its peculiar tradition, and was tolerated by the Roman bishops who sent the eucharist to the Asiatic presbyters as they did to all other groups of the community; but Victor refused to follow his predecessors' example, and the Asiatics separated from his obedience and formed an independent church with Blastus as their bishop. This fully explains why Irenaeus not merely says that the Roman Church formerly communed with those who had come from the communities where the custom of the fourteenth was

¹⁶ Philadel. 4. There are good reasons for thinking that the fermentum was established much earlier than the times of Melchiades. The duty to carry the eucharist was entrusted to the acolyti, who seem to have been a peculiar Roman institution for the purpose of taking the eucharist to those who were absent and, we add also, to the presbyters who presided at the various liturgical meetings of the scattered community. The institution of the acolyti belongs very likely to the second century, since about the middle of the third century they already formed a large body of minor officers in the Western Church. It has been surmised that the puzzling sentence in Victor's biography in the *Liber Pontificalis*: "Ilic fecit sequentes cleros," followed by no other indication, might refer to the institution of the acolytes. Harnack concludes his remarks on this point: "So mag auch die Nachricht, dass unter Viktor die Akoluthen zuerst aufgetaucht sind, auf guter Überlieferung beruhen" (*Die Mission*, 4 ed. 1924, p. 863, note).

¹⁷ Ed. Kroymann, CSEL. XXVII, 1906, p. 225.

observed, but mentions explicitly the fact that the bishop of Rome customarily sent the eucharist to their liturgical meetings.

The truth is, therefore, that the question of the Easter celebration was an internal problem of the Church of Rome. In the controversy between Polycarp and Anicetus it was not that the bishop of Rome assumed the right to interfere with matters affecting merely the churches of Asia; on the contrary it was Polycarp who, in order to defend the Asiatic tradition wherever it was observed, interfered with the government of the Roman Church and with the ordinances of its bishop.¹⁸ If the Asiatic custom had not been habitually observed in Rome by a fraction of the local Christian community, there would have been no quarrel. Rome's own problems were too urgent for it to think of provoking the churches of Asia on this point of minor importance, if the liturgical divergence did not affect directly the Roman community. It was precisely the fact remarked by Irenaeus, that such a divergence was to be found within the narrow circle of the same church, that made it a serious question. Anicetus was right in attempting to introduce uniformity, for in a church rent by dissensions, and in which the rights of the monarchical episcopal power were daily challenged by obstinate opposition, a divergence of that kind

¹⁸ The visit of Polycarp took place about the end of the year 154 or at the beginning of 155, a few months after the election of Anicetus and when Polycarp was more than eighty years old. There is no mention that Anicetus had summoned the churches of Asia to abandon their tradition: it would be very surprising if such a thing had happened at that time. The most natural explanation is that the Asiatics of Rome, to whom Anicetus's command had been given to desist from their Easter celebration on a different date, appealed to Polycarp, who was not only the bishop of one of the most important churches of their land of origin, but was also the oldest living representative of the apostolic tradition of the Asiatic churches. Polycarp thus came to Rome not to plead the cause of the Asiatic churches, whose tradition was not directly attacked, but on behalf of the Roman group, which was an offspring of the Asiatic churches, and whose condemnation would have affected indirectly the Asiatic tradition as a whole. It is not difficult to realize that in a period in which the system of relation between churches was based solely on the spirit of mutual love and had no juridical form, a bishop like Polycarp felt a sense of responsibility for the groups of his own people to be found in other communities than his own. If the right of interference in such cases had been recognized, it would have had far-reaching consequences. Anicetus's deferential attitude toward Polycarp formed a dangerous precedent, which, as we shall see, was effectively overcome by the different and energetic policy of Victor.

had become almost the symbol and tangible sign of the autonomy of a group, and gave to the presbyters who directed the group the character of independent and authoritative representatives of a tradition which was not the tradition of the Roman Church. The monarchical episcopate could not prevail in Rome unless the groups were abolished, and they could not be abolished unless the characteristics which secured their individuality were absorbed and lost in the law of uniformity.

But the coming of Polycarp to Rome led Anicetus to realize the serious implications of the step he was about to take. If the Asiatic custom was truly of apostolic origin, how could he forbid it in Rome? And if he forbade its observance in Rome, what about the churches of Asia? Could the same tradition be venerated in Asia and anathema in Rome? Anicetus recognized that while the question was an internal problem of the Roman Church, it was at the same time one which affected the church at large and could not be solved without a due consideration of the traditions and the feelings of other churches. And he did not dare to forbid the Asiatic custom, although it cost him the failure to enforce the law of the monarchical episcopate in his own community. This instance, of which we happen to know the details, is typical of the general situation; undoubtedly in many other cases of doctrinal or practical divergence the bishops of Rome found themselves confronted with similar alternatives. But their hesitations, though justified, were nevertheless gradually leading to the complete disintegration of the community. A reaction against this policy must soon have arisen in certain circles of the Roman Church; in a definite form it made its appearance in the last decades of the second century.

This reaction emerges to the light of history for the first time with a bishop of undoubted Latin stock and of Latin speech and training, Victor, a native of Roman Africa. It was at first merely a reaction against the local anarchy in the church, an attempt to impose a definite disciplinary rule and to enforce the rights of the hierarchy. Later, especially under Victor's successors Zephyrinus and Callistus, it assumed more openly the character of a strong reaction against what we should call the

intellectualism of the learned groups of Eastern theologians and their philosophizing disciples. With Victor, who seems to have been himself a learned man, it was primarily a question of the rights of the monarchical bishop against the groups which claimed independence and autonomy while remaining in the membership of the church.

This reaction against the individualism of hellenistic Christianity, while it claimed to remain faithful to the doctrinal tradition, did not deny the validity of an intellectual elaboration, and at the same time, in the name of the disciplinary tradition, aimed at a further development of the local hierarchical system of church government and administration. It was Montanism that, claiming to represent a return to the original prophetic inspiration of early Christianity, implied a radical denial of both the legitimacy of the hierarchical system and the intellectualism of the theologians. The Roman Church under Victor advocated only the right to interpret tradition in the light of the practical needs and circumstances of the local Christian community.

Theology was not banished, but the principle was implicitly -- emphasized that Christianity was primarily not a theology but a saving faith and a Church in which unity and uniformity were necessary in order that it should be truly a universal instrument of salvation. In other words the aim was to check the development of opposing traditions of practice and also of unbridled theological passions by strengthening the hierarchical principle of government and by subordinating intellectual curiosity to the vital interests of the organization. On the one hand it was a return to the simple fundamental conception of Christianity as a way of salvation through faith and sacraments, but on the other it was a further step in the development of ecclesiastical polity by the adoption of the principle that the rights of the organization were above all local and group traditions, no matter how old and how sacred they might be.

Bishop Victor, with whom this program of government began to assume a concrete form, was undoubtedly a strong personality. His election to the episcopate, however, in a church

which up to that time had been under the control of the hellenistic element of the community, suggests something more than mere chance or personal influence. It implies the presence in the community of a Latin group strong enough to hold the balance of power in the choice of the bishop. After all, by far the largest part of the Roman Christians were poor people of the humbler classes, little concerned with theological questions or with elaborate philosophical explanations of their simple faith. They looked upon the church as an instrument of salvation, a religious and social organization with practical purposes and with a definite program of spiritual and moral activities. They could see without difficulty that lack of unity in the church was the cause of many evils. It must have greatly affected even the charitable activities of the church and the work of assistance which had such vital importance in the life of the Christian community. The interests of the simple believers thus coincided with the interests of the monarchical episcopate, and their alliance was a decisive factor towards the solution of the crisis.

It is likely that Christianity early gained followers among the native population of Rome, but evidently for a long time they were too few to be of importance in the community. As early as the Flavian dynasty there is evidence that even certain members of the high Roman aristocracy embraced the Christian faith, and many more converts bearing famous names joined the church during the second century. But these were persons of culture; it was probably due to their hellenistic training that they had come to feel the value of Christianity, and they would find no difficulty in adapting themselves to the hellenistic character and traditions of the Roman Church. Undoubtedly the small Latin group must have grown; they must have had their special meetings for instruction and for liturgical celebrations in Latin. Passages from the Old and New Testament, with psalms, hymns, and prayers translated into Latin, must have been available for them and for the Christian propaganda among the Latin population of Rome.

About the middle of the second century the Latin group, belonging mostly to the poor and uneducated classes, already

formed a considerable part of the Christian community. At least the Marcionites of Rome must have deemed the Latins an important element in the church, since pains were taken to translate into Latin the Marcionite Bible. Whether this was the first Latin translation of the sacred books, and whether and to what extent this translation affected the other Latin translations used in the West from the third century on, is a matter largely of conjecture. But the fact itself that such a translation was made in Rome shortly after the middle of the second century, shows that in their work of propaganda the Marcionites laid great weight on the conquest of the Latin element of the Roman population, as if they had surmised that the destiny of Roman Christianity was dependent upon the Latin race.¹⁹

We do not know how successful this propaganda was, but it must have been efficient enough to awaken the presbyters of the Roman Church to the necessity of counteracting the Marcionite missionary work among the Latins and thus led them to give more importance to the Latin element in the Christian community. Now there are good reasons to think that this Latin group of the Roman Church consisted not only of natives, but also, and probably in a larger measure, of African immigrants or of the descendants of African stock settled in Rome. Historians have neglected this fact, which seems to me of great importance, and yet the history of Rome at the end of the second century affords plenty of evidence that in that period the Africans played a part of primary importance in Roman

¹⁹ A. Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott. Eine Monographie zur Geschichte der Grundlegung der katholischen Kirche* (T. U. XLV), Leipzig, 1921. The evidence that the Marcionites had a Latin translation of their Bible is conclusive (pp. 47-54). It is derived from the passages quoted by Tertullian (*Adv. Marcionem*), which, as Harnack shows, were not Tertullian's own translations from the Greek Marcionite Bible, but were taken from an existing Marcionite Latin text. The fragments of this Marcionite Latin Bible and a comparison of them with the fragments of the Latin Bible of Novatian may be found in the recent book of A. D'Alès, *Novatien, Étude sur la Théologie Romaine au milieu du III^e siècle*, Paris, 1925, pp. 79-82. This translation was probably made shortly after the middle of the second century, since, as D'Alès remarks, "la propagande marcionite battait son plain vers l'an 150 et il se pourrait que la Bible latine de Marcion ait été des lors créée à Rome comme instrument de cette propagande (idée lancée par Lietzmann, *Der Römerbrief*, p. 14, 15, 1919)" (p. 78 and note 1).

politics and also, it would seem, in the life of the Christian community.

The fact that in the year 193, when Septimius Severus, born of an equestrian family at Leptis in Roman Africa, was recognized as emperor, the Christian community of Rome was also governed by a bishop who was a native of the same Roman Africa, is highly suggestive. Needless to say, there is no direct connection between the two facts, but they bear witness to the importance then acquired by the African element in the life of the capital, and both facts affected more than is commonly recognized the future destinies of empire and of church.

Provincial emperors were not a new sight in Rome. Under the adoptive system Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, both from the Spanish province, as well as Antoninus himself, born at Lanuvium but of provincial stock, held the imperial authority with such success that their period marks the furthest point of Roman expansion. But in spite of their provincial origin the Antonines had assumed to represent the purest Roman political tradition. Under the new African emperor, on the contrary, the military monarchy overcame the last resistance offered by the ancient institutions.^{19a}

It was not a mere chance that a provincial from an equestrian family of Roman Africa became emperor. Severus was not the first African to reach a prominent position in Rome. In the province conquered after a long and bloody struggle Roman colonization had created on the ruins of ancient Carthage a new centre of Latin spirit and Latin traditions. To be sure, the native Berbers were never truly romanized; a small number of them dwelling in the cities and in the Roman settlements were absorbed by the dominant element of the population, but the great bulk of Berbers, grouped in the mountains, preserved their laws, their customs, their religious traditions, and were very

^{19a} Severus appears to have been very anxious to connect his family with the dynastic tradition of the Antonini. He assumed the titles: *Divi Antonini Germanici Filius*; *Divi Pii Anton. Nepos*; *Divi Hadriani Pronepos*; *Divi Traiani Abnepos*; *Divi Nervae Adnepos*. But this ideal dynastic connection, significant as it is, does not change the fact that his policy was a breach in the Antonine political tradition. On the significance of this attempt of Severus see Costa, *Religione e politica nell'Impero Romano*, Torino, 1923, pp. 11, 17ff.

little affected by Roman civilization. When therefore we speak of the Africans who represented the political and cultural life of that province, we must not forget that we are dealing with a population mostly of Roman descent, mixed in various degrees with the Punic element and affected by Punic institutions, especially those of a religious nature, but with only a slight infusion of Berber blood.

At the end of the second century there was in Rome a large African colony. Aside from the slaves and prisoners of war (mostly Berbers and Moors or members of other tribes which kept on attacking the Roman military posts even after the pacification of the province) and from the descendants of the prisoners of the Punic wars, the great majority of African immigrants in Rome either could trace their descent directly from Roman families or from officers and soldiers of the Roman army or were of Punic descent with admixture of Roman blood. ✓ Unlike all other foreigners they must have felt at home in the capital, since by language and family traditions they were not very different from the Romans of purely native descent.

Their feelings must have been much like those of the modern descendant of an English settler in Australia or Canada who establishes his residence in London. But in spite of this affinity, or perhaps on account of it, the Romans seem to have liked the African immigrants no better than those of other races. In high society they were considered intruders and made few friends. Among the common people the traditional characterization of the Africans as a treacherous race, unreliable, given to superstitious practices, a tradition which went back to the Punic wars and was probably strengthened during the war against Jugurtha, was very much alive and deeply rooted in the general consciousness. Evidently the Romans were bent on overlooking the blood-connection which linked the new African population to Rome, and ever saw in the African immigrants simply the descendants of the ancient Punic warriors who barely failed to conquer Rome.²⁰

²⁰ The great African teacher of rhetoric, Cornelius Fronto, after having passed the greater part of his life in Rome and having received all the honors that a Roman could desire, including the consulate, complains in his letters that he had never found among

The presence in Rome of so many slaves of Punic descent and of the Berber race must have contributed not a little to the crystallization of public opinion as to the bad character of the Africans. In Rome they were crowded into the region between the Coelium and the Aventine next to the Subura, and the names of several vici of that district recall the African origin of the inhabitants.²¹ The very fact that many Roman aristocratic families possessed large estates in the African province, and the close commercial and political relations of the capital with the chief source of the city's food-supply, accounts for the presence in Rome of a large group of immigrants from African cities and towns.²² The service of the *annona*, especially after its reorganization by Commodus, contributed largely in bringing to

the Romans any sincere and warm friendship. "Simplicity, continence, truthfulness, honor are Roman virtues, but warmth of affection is not Roman, for there is nothing which, my whole life through, I have seen less of at Rome than a man unfeignedly *φιλόστοργον*. The reason why there is not even a word in our language for this virtue must, I imagine, be that in reality no one in Rome has any warm affection" (ad Verum, ii, 7, Loeb Class. Libr. II, p. 154). For the general opinion of the Romans about the Africans see a letter of Marcus Aurelius commending Ceionius Albinus from Hadrumetum, later a competitor of Severus for the empire, in which it is said: "Albino ex familia Ceionorum, Afro quidem homini sed non multa ex Afris habenti, duas cohortes alares regendas dedi." It was a title of honor to have little of the African character even in the eyes of a philosopher like Marcus Aurelius (Julii Capitolini, Clodius Albinus, p. x).

²¹ Through that district ran the famous Vicus Capitis Africae, where stood the well-known Paedagogium Caesaris, and also other vici whose names have a distinct African flavor, such as Vicus Stabuli Proconsulis, Vicus Syrtis, Vicus Byzacenus, and Vicus Capsensis. This list of names of Roman vici is found in the curious document known as the 'Appendix Probi', which has been often reprinted (Altfranzösische Übungsbuch von W. Foerster und E. Koschwitz, 3d. ed., 1907, pp. 226-234). It has been a subject of much discussion whether this list of vici was made in Carthage and is to be referred to a district of Carthage (G. Paris, *Mélange Renier*, 1867; *Mélange Boissier*, 1903, pp. 5-9; Sittl, 'Die Heimat d. Appendix Probi,' in *Archiv f. latein. Lexicogr.*, 1889, p. 557) or, as is more commonly held, was made in a Roman school and refers to a Roman district (Ullman, *Roman. Forsch.*, VII, 1891, p. 145; Foerster l. c.; Schanz, *Gesch. d. Röm. Litt.*, III, 2, p. 444, 2d ed., 1913). The document is commonly assigned to the third century. The evidence, historical and archaeological, for the existence of the Vicus Capitis Africae in Rome between the Coelium and the Aventine is undeniable (C. Gatti, 'Del Caput Africae nella seconda regione di Roma', in *Annali dell' Istituto di corr. arch.*, Rome, 1882, pp. 191-220).

²² On the possessions of Roman families in Africa see the remarkable work of J. Mesnage, *L'Évangélisation de l'Afrique, Part que certaines familles Romano-Africaines y ont prise*, Paris, 1914.

Rome African settlers or sojourners such as, for instance, the mariners of the annonarian navy, who during the winter lived in Ostia and Rome waiting for the reopening of the traffic in the spring. The surprising number of *stationes naviculariorum* for African sailors found in Ostia, is witness of the numbers and importance of this part of the African population in or near the capital.²³

But the most remarkable and interesting group of African immigrants was that of professional men and of members of wealthy families. For the scions of the African aristocratic families, who so often traced back their origin to famous Roman names, Rome was the place of higher education and of training for a public career. The African branches of the Caecilii, the Caecionii, the Valerii, and as well the sons of wealthy families of African origin, following their example, could not consider an education completed without an experience of life in the capital. Still more urgent must have been the call of Rome to those who cherished political ambitions, not restricted to the provincial *cursus honorum*, but with a broader outlook on the empire at large. From the beginning of the second century the influence of the Africans in the public life of Rome began to grow, and later under the Antonines it received a great impulse. Numbers of Africans are then found holding prominent positions in the army and magistracies and in the literary circles of the capital. Under Trajan we find no less than five Africans sitting in the Roman Senate, and the number increased to eleven under Antoninus Pius.²⁴ From the letters of Fronto, an African native of Cirta, the greatest rhetorician of his time and the teacher of Marcus Aurelius, we learn that both in the Curia and in the Palace many Africans, especially natives of Cirta, occupied positions of importance.²⁵ But the summit of African influence was reached under Severus, and it is remarkable that one of the competitors of Severus for the imperial

²³ P. Cagnat, L'Annone d'Afrique (Mémoires de l'Acad. d'Inscrip. et Belles Lettres, XL, 1915, pp. 247 f.) On the *stationes* of the *navicularii Africani* in Ostia see Calza, 'Le Stazioni,' etc., in Bull. Com. Roma, 1913, pp. 178 f.; and description of new discoveries in Notizie degli Scavi, 1916, pp. 326 f.; 1920, p. 166.

²⁴ G. Lully, pp. 243-249.

²⁵ Fronto, Loeb Class. Library, II, p. 292.

succession, and one to be greatly feared, was another African, Clodius Albinus, legate of Britain.²⁶

That among the African immigrants in Rome there were many Christians would be naturally surmised, and is proved by archaeological and historical evidence. When the church of Africa comes into the light in the last decades of the second century, it is already Latin in language and liturgy, though Greek influences were not lacking in the Christian community of Carthage. But in spite of its probable Eastern origin, the church of Africa shows the influence of the peculiar character of the Latin and Punic population among which it was established, through the presence both in its teaching and its liturgy of a tradition of its own, and it acquired a marked individuality. The African church was a Latin church when the Church of Rome was still hellenistic and Greek-speaking.²⁷

Gnosticism did not find a favorable ground, and never gained a foothold, in the church of Africa: the African Christians did not assume that Christianity was to solve at once the

²⁶ Aelius Spartianus, the biographer of Severus, remarks that Septimius, in rebuilding the great monument in Rome called in his honor the Septizonium, "had no other thought than that his building should strike the eyes of those who came from Africa to Rome" (xxiv, p. 3). On the special care that Septimius took of the African provinces, and on the enthusiasm of the Africans for Severus, see Leclercq, *L'Afrique chrétienne*, I, p. 26 and Platnauer, pp. 299 ff.

²⁷ The origins of the African church are unknown. On the much debated question of its early Eastern or Roman connections see Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, I, Paris, 1901, pp. 1-28; Leclercq, *L'Afrique chrétienne*, I, pp. 31-68 (Paris, 1904); and the article 'Afrique' by the same in *DACL*, I, cols. 576 ff.; Mesnage, *Le Christianisme en Afrique*, Paris, 1914, pp. 1-79 (in favor of the apostolicity of the African church); Lejay, *Les origines de l'Eglise d'Afrique*, Liège, 1908 (*Mélanges Kurth*). The presence of Greek elements and the use of the Greek language in the early Christian community of Carthage is not necessarily an evidence of the Eastern origin of that church, since the Church of Rome at that time also consisted chiefly of Greek-speaking groups. More weight is to be found in the fact of the presence in the African liturgy of traditions which connect it directly with the churches of Asia (Monceaux, I, p. 7; Duchesne, *Origines du Culte chrétien*, pp. 220-222). On the complicated liturgical question see D. Cabrol, 'Afrique, Liturgie' in *DACL*, I, cols. 591 f. and Thibaut, *La Liturgie romaine*. Paris, 1924. After all it seems to me that the conclusion of Monceaux is still the most satisfactory, that Christianity was probably introduced into Africa from Asia Minor, but spread in the interior through the missionary work of the Roman Church (I, p. 8). As for the hellenistic character of the early African church, we may accept the general statement of Leclercq: "*L'Afrique fut témoin d'un essai d'hellénisme; il dura peu et il n'en resta rien*" (*L'Afrique chrétienne*, I, p. 91).

great problems of contemporary thought, nor had they the tendency to consider the church as a school for philosophical learning. Their interest was in the ethical and juridical content of revelation and redemption, rather than in their metaphysical aspect and implications. Another but no less significant fact is the slight importance given by the African Christians to the apocryphal writings. When we realize that in the Eastern churches and those which grew up under Eastern influence the apocryphal literature gave rise to authorized popular traditions which through the centuries found expression in peculiar forms of doctrine and of religious practice, we can see how the absence of this important element among the Africans concurred with the absence of Gnostic influences to imprint upon African Christianity a notably practical character in contrast with the doctrinal prepossessions of the hellenistic churches.²⁸

Very early the church of Africa came to possess a Latin translation of the Bible of its own and also Latin translations of other Christian writings such as the Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistle of Clement.²⁹ It seems therefore that there were close relations between the Christian community of Rome and those of Africa, and the archaeologists have even found traces of undeniable Roman influence in the oldest African cemeteries. But about the end of the second century it would seem that African Christianity was in its turn influencing the Roman community and contributing largely to the new development of the Roman Church.

It is true that the archaeological evidence of the presence of large groups of African Christians in Rome belongs to the third century,³⁰ and that to this later period is limited the large docu-

²⁸ E. Buonaiuti, *Il Cristianesimo nell'Africa Romana*, in *Saggi sul Cristianesimo primitivo*, Città di Castello, 1923, pp. 357-379.

²⁹ Monceaux, *Hist. Litt. de l'Afrique chrét.*, I, pp. 97-173; Hans von Soden, *Das lateinische Neue Testament in Afrika zur Zeit Cyprians* (T. U., XXIII), Leipzig, 1909; Harnack, *Geschichte der Alchristlichen Literatur*, II, pp. 881 ff.; Schanz, *Geschichte d. römischen Litteratur*, III, 3rd ed., 1922, with complete bibliography, pp. 441-458.

³⁰ O. Marucchi in his description of the Catacomb of Commodilla (NBAC. 1904, pp. 41-160) gives all the inscriptions with African names found in that cemetery. See also his preface to Mesnage, *L'Évangélisation de l'Afrique*, p. vi: "Une partie du cimetière de Commodilla a été réservée à la sépulture des Africains, qui très probablement demeuraient dans les environs de la voie d'Ostie." On the paintings of the Ostrianum

mentary evidence of mutual influences between the Church of Rome and the churches of Carthage: but the events of the third century must have been a further development of a situation already in existence at the end of the second century. The process, for instance, through which so many formulae and traditions of the African liturgy appear to have been early introduced into the Latin liturgy of Rome must be referred to the period in the last decades of the second century when the Latin group in Rome began to acquire importance. The large group of African Christians in Rome was the natural channel through which African traditions were introduced there, and to this group, allied to the native Latin group of the community, is due the beginning of the latinization of the Roman Church.³¹

The election of Victor is itself significant of the numerical strength of the Africans and of the importance they had acquired in the community. We know nothing about Victor previous to his election to the episcopate, except that he was an African. Possibly he had come to Rome as a presbyter for the spiritual assistance of the African group. Presbyters and deacons who emigrated to foreign cities were not infrequent even in that early period. In the time of Cyprian it is clear from his epistles that such occurrences were common.³²

representing scenes from the *Annona Africae* see DACL. I, 1704, art. 'Amphore,' and I, 2267-2279, art. 'Annone,' by Leclercq. About the African Christians in Rome, Mesnage (*Le Christianisme en Afrique*, Paris, 1914) has written a few rather poetical pages, with several questionable assumptions, as for instance, that the "*castra peregrina*" were "*sans doute, la caserne des soldats Africains de passage dans la capitale*" (p. 86), or that Callistus was a deacon of Victor (p. 87). But his remark: "*C'est Rome et ses Catacombes qu'il faut interroger pour avoir une idée de la puissante vitalité de l'Église d'Afrique à la fin du II^e siècle et au commencement du III^e*" (p. 85) presents in a few striking words the true situation.

³¹ Duchesne, *Origines du culte chrétien*, 2nd ed., p. 83; DACL. I, cols. 591 f., art. 'Afrique, Liturgie,' by Cabrol, cols. 658 ff.; art. 'Afrique, Archéologie,' by Leclercq; *Dict. d'Hist. et Geogr. chrét.*, I, art. 'Afrique,' by Audollent.

³² That Victor was an African seems beyond doubt, though several indications found in the *Liber Pontificalis* concerning the land of origin of the early bishops of Rome are open to question or even entirely wrong. See: Harnack, *Die Mission*, 4th ed. Ekk. I, 'Die Herkunft der ersten Päpste,' pp. 817-832, and for Victor p. 826. The earliest mention of an African Martyr in Italy is that of Caesarius, deacon in Terracina under Nero. That he was an African is affirmed by his 'Acta' of the late fifth or sixth century. Probably a mere invention of the writer. The supposed emigration of saints from Africa to Italy was a favorite theme of the sixth century hagiographers: F. Lan-

Victor's advent to the episcopal chair secured a more considerable place for the Latin language in the Roman liturgy, since presumably with him Latin became the language in which the head of the community officiated. To be sure the other groups of Oriental origin continued to use their Greek liturgical language and later there were bishops of Greek origin who may have used it again, but for the first time the Latin language had come out from the inconspicuous place which it held up to that time, and had made a definite step toward becoming the official language of the Roman Church. In his polemical treatises also Victor used the Latin language, a bad Latin, hints Jerome, who had read his works, probably as bad as the Latin of Septimius, but it must have been a very energetic Latin if Victor wrote with the same determination with which he administered the Roman Church.³³

It will not be useless to remark that this establishment of the Latin language in the Roman Church coincided with a certain tendency in some Roman circles of the time to react against the process of hellenization of Roman literature, which had already gone too far. Such a reaction began to be felt even in the time of that most hellenistically inclined emperor Hadrian, who in reorganizing the imperial chancery separated the Latin secretarial office from the Greek and made of it a special department. But the reaction assumed a more definite form later, when Fronto and his circle, as we are told by his friend Aulus Gellius, undertook the restoration of the Latin language.³⁴ And it is remarkable that Fronto, the champion of this restoration, a purist not free from pedantry, a teacher who used to inflict

zoni, *Le origini delle diocesi antiche d'Italia*. Rome, 1923, p. 106 and Appendix p. 607-652.

³³ *De viris illustribus*, 34; Chron. ann. 193: "Victor cuius mediocria de religione extant volumina"; Schanz, III, 3rd ed., 1922, p. 272. On the attribution to Victor of *De aleatoribus*, see Monceaux, I, p. 54; Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, II, 2nd ed., 1914, p. 497, and Schanz, I. c., p. 376.

³⁴ Aul. Gellius, ii. 26; xiii. 28; xix. 8-13. On Fronto's characteristics see Schanz, I. c., III, pp. 88-100. His 'elocutio novella' was to consist "partly of the good old Latin words which had died out in the days of classicism, and partly of new words which were in use in the language of common life but were excluded from literature" (D. Brook, *Fronto and His Age*, Cambridge, 1911, p. 104). See also A. Beltrami, *Le tendenze letterarie negli scritti di Frontone*, Rome, 1907.

punishment on his pupil Marcus Aurelius because the boy preferred to write in Greek rather than in Latin,³⁵ this man whom his contemporaries called unique in his knowledge of the Latin language, was, as we have already noticed, an African and, far from being ashamed of that, used to call himself a Libyan of the Libyans. The circumstance that Fronto, the leader in this literary movement, and Victor, the first Roman bishop to use Latin as the official language of the church, were both Africans, is again a striking coincidence.

As already observed, Victor appears as the authoritative representative of the reaction against the hellenistic spirit and the policy of the Eastern groups which up to that time had controlled the Roman Church. With him the latinization of the Roman Church received a great impulse and the Western Church, not as a mere geographical expression but as a new powerful factor in the development of Christianity, emerges into the light of history. A man like Victor, who though he had theological culture³⁶ is more conspicuous for his practical Roman mind, was naturally led to consider the church primarily as an organization and not as a theology. He was bound to give more weight to the vital interests of the institution of which he was the leader and guardian than to the sentimental value of more or less authoritative traditions.

The episode of his conflict with the Asiatics is very suggestive. Whereas Anicetus, about the middle of the century, had not dared to condemn the Asiatic group of Rome after Polycarp had persuaded him that the Asiatic tradition of the celebration of Easter was of apostolic origin, Victor on the contrary, less than thirty years later, was not deterred by the argument of apostolicity and by the resolute language and defiant attitude of Polycrates and the other Asiatic bishops, and did not hesitate to separate them from his communion, and with them the Asiatics

³⁵ Marcus Aurelius to Fronto: "Tunc es qui me nuper concastigaras quorsum graece scriberem?" (Loeb Class. Library, Fronto, i, p. 18).

³⁶ It is known that Victor wrote treatises or epistles on doctrinal topics. Hippolytus, who according to the suggestion of De Rossi (*Bullettino di archeologia cristiana*, 1866, p. 13) had probably been a deacon or official of the Roman Church under Victor, speaks very respectfully of him.

of the Roman group. Unlike Anicetus, Victor was confronted from the beginning with the problem as a whole and not only in relation to the Asiatics of his community. The necessity laid upon him was but the consequence of Anicetus's concession to Polycarp thirty years before. In their compromise both of the two traditions, Asiatic and Roman, had been implicitly recognized as lawful and to be freely observed, the one in Asia and by Asiatics in Rome, the other by those churches which followed the Roman custom. Any attempt on the part of Victor to oblige the Asiatics of Rome to give up their tradition was sure to meet with their legitimate resistance, in the name of that compromise to maintain the status quo. It was evident that the question could not be reopened now without dealing directly with the churches of Asia. This explains the wise tactics of Victor in urging the bishops not merely of Asia but of other provinces to call synods and to inform him as to what was the tradition followed in their churches. Victor, foreseeing the resistance of the Asiatics both of Rome and of Asia, wished to be sure that the majority of the Christian churches were on his side, and the referendum taken at his request was to be the justification of his firm decision to deny to his opponents communion with the Roman Church.³⁷

³⁷ Eusebius (H. E., v. 23) says that synods were held in Rome, in Palestine, Pontus, Corinth, Osroene, and "in other places," and that all of them pronounced in favor of the Roman tradition. The fact that a synod of bishops was gathered in Rome at this time suggests that the Christian communities of Italy had begun to be organized under the episcopal régime. In the almost total absence of trustworthy historical evidence on the origin of the early Italian bishoprics, authoritative scholars like Duchesne (*Histoire ancienne de l'église*, I, pp. 253 ff. and 524-526) and F. Savio ('Alcune considerazioni sulla prima diffusione del Cristianesimo in Italia,' in *Rivista di Scienze Storiche*, 1914, pp. 108 ff.) have conjectured that during the first and in part of the second century, the Christian communities around Rome and even of Southern Italy had no bishops of their own, but were governed by the bishop of Rome through both resident and visiting presbyters and deacons. A parallel is found in the bishop of Alexandria, who for a long time was the only bishop of Egypt. F. Lanzoni (*Le origini delle diocesi antiche d'Italia*, Rome, 1923, pp. 595 ff.) agrees with Duchesne and Savio, but remarks that such a situation had come to an end at the time of Victor. (See remarks by A. Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung d. Christentums*. 4 ed. 1924, p. 866-872.)

It is possible, however, that bishoprics were established in Southern Italy at an early date under the influence of Eastern missionaries, and that the bishops of the Roman synod under Victor were from those regions. But it is significant that the effec-

It was a bold stroke, which inspired much fear in many pious souls and much criticism even among those who were in accord with the Church of Rome. Warnings came from various sides, and especially from Irenaeus, who then wrote the letter to Victor quoted above, recalling the respect due to the old compromise between Anicetus and Polycarp. But for Victor it was a matter of vital importance; the root of the question was always the internal problem of his own church, which could be solved only by enforcing the law of unity and uniformity in the whole Roman Christian community. It was only in this way that he could secure the recognition of his episcopal authority as the supreme law of his own church, and restore peace and order among those entrusted to his pastoral care.

As we mentioned above, the Asiatics of Rome rebelled, and formed an independent sect with Blastus as their leader. The churches of Asia kept their tradition; but how long they remained away from communion with Rome we do not know. Probably not very long, since on the one hand Victor could not fail to be impressed by the unfavorable reaction of many churches against his rash measure, and on the other hand the rebellion of the Asiatics of Rome settled the matter so far as his own community was directly concerned. A small group of that kind could not long survive after its secession from the local church.

The unfavorable reaction of the churches, of which Irenaeus's letter is witness, was evidently caused by the fact that

tive episcopal organization of Italy begins about the end of the second century, and it is found well advanced about the middle of the third. Northern Italy does not offer any evidence of a Christian penetration up to that time, since, as Lanzoni has conclusively shown, the two most ancient sees north of Rome, Milan and Ravenna, were established not earlier than the late second century (p. 585). It seems, therefore, that the regions of Italy, which, with exception of a few maritime and commercial centres, were but little or not at all affected by Hellenism, began to be evangelized with a certain success at the same time that the Roman Church itself was undergoing the process of latinization. The episcopate of Victor would then mark also the turning-point in the missionary work of the Roman Church among the Latin populations of Italy. Was the Roman synod gathered by Victor an occasion for awakening his interest in such a work? Did Victor take definite steps in this direction? There is no way of knowing, but the suggestion in favor of such an hypothesis would throw light on the importance of Victor's episcopate, which has generally been overlooked by the historians except for a few remarks by Langen, in his *Geschichte der römischen Kirche*, I, Bonn, 1881, pp. 179 ff.

Victor's policy in this controversy represented a striking innovation in the attitude of organized Christianity towards tradition in general. It seems as if the same spirit which had led the new Roman juridical school to oppose old-fashioned formalism in the interpretation of legal tradition, was at work in the Roman Church, and as if the son of Roman Africa who now occupied the episcopal chair had a different idea of the value of the so-called apostolic tradition from that of his Greek and Oriental predecessors. When he dared to ban a tradition which went back to apostolic times, but which had become a stumbling block to the unification and the peace of his community and to the triumph of the episcopal supremacy, Victor formulated implicitly the doctrine that tradition was not to be a millstone around the neck of a living institution, but was to be subordinated to the vital exigencies of Christian discipline, nay, was to be considered as one and identical with the institution itself, moving and developing with it according to the growing needs of a healthy organism.

This came to be precisely the main difference between the hellenistic Christian tendency and the new Latin Christian policy; the former conceived of tradition as something eternal, having a divine value in itself, unchangeable even in its smallest details, to be kept under any circumstances, and above all historical exigencies and all human judgments; the latter, on the contrary, looked at tradition rather as of relative validity, and reserved to the controlling power the right to modify and to re-interpret it in the light of new events and of the new circumstances created by the practical situation and urgent needs of the organization. This was the beginning of that historical process which in time led the Roman Church to identify Christian tradition with its own doctrine and its own organization.

It was the adoption of this program and the growing consciousness of its implications that made of the Church of Rome a Latin church, — not so much through a gradual change in its liturgical language and in the formulae of its official correspondence as by the change in the general direction of its religious and ecclesiastical policy. Such a change could not fail to provoke a rapid development of a definite system of inter-church relations and to secure a higher value for the function

of the Roman hierarchy in the whole church. It implied also the working out of a more definite system of relations between the church and the world, based not on the heroic standard of morality which had been the ideal of early Christianity kindled by the apocalyptic hope, but on a more sympathetic understanding of human weaknesses and human possibilities. If the church was to be an instrument of salvation for the whole world, it could not insist on offering as a common standard of morality an ideal that could be reached only by few; the church had to formulate rules of conduct which could be really observed by the average man. If Christianity was to become truly the universal religion, it needed a sounder basis than conflicting traditions, prophetic enthusiasm, and apocalyptic visions.

This new program of the church, which was gradually formulated as a result of trying experiences, especially in the large communities such as Rome, appears already implicitly contained in the attitude of Victor towards tradition and still more clearly in the various activities of his episcopal administration. It was carried on and developed to its logical conclusion by his successors: by Callistus, who took a definite stand against the irreconcilable rigoristic interpreters of the disciplinary tradition of the church; by Cornelius, who sanctioned the principle of indulgence toward the *lapsi* against the narrow puritanism of the Novatians; by the Roman bishops, who stood for the validity of baptism administered by heretics. The opposite tradition on sacramental validity, propounded by Cyprian of Carthage and by numbers of Eastern bishops, was probably more in harmony with the spirit of Christian teaching and its theoretical implications, but it would have been fatal to the organization and to the hierarchical government in its unavoidable practical consequences. This was enough to make the governing power of the Church of Rome take sides against it and adopt, defend, and impose with all its might the opposite principle.

Historians have called attention to the far-reaching interaction between ethics and eschatology in the first Christian centuries. Christian morality became more elevated and more

heroic, the more closely it was linked to the intense expectation of the impending parousia.³⁸ But about the beginning of the third century the great apocalyptic dreams had lost much of their impressiveness for the growing Christian masses, and in spite of prophetic outbursts and sporadic revivals, the need of reducing the Gospel teaching of renunciation to the formulas of a religion capable of adapting itself to circumstances and making compromises with them was strongly felt in both the East and the West. And especially was it felt in the great Christian centres where the bishops found themselves confronted with the impossibility of imposing the ideal program of Christianity upon large and growing communities. That it frankly admitted this necessity and acted accordingly with official authority was the merit of the Church of Rome, where from the time of Victor the new policy gradually assumed a definite shape.³⁹

It is thus no exaggeration to say that the episcopate of Victor marks a turning-point in the history of the Church of Rome. With a truly Roman insight Victor realized that the worst policy was to permit the equivocal situation of uncertainty as to doctrine and practice in the community to continue unaltered, so that in the end Christians themselves would have been puzzled to know who were the real Christians. Fully aware that the avowedly heretical groups, such as Gnostics and Marcionites, were outside the reach of his authority, Victor concentrated his efforts upon establishing a closer union among the other groups partly by assimilation, partly by the elimination

³⁸ E. Buonaiuti, 'The Ethics and Eschatology of Methodius of Olympus,' *Harvard Theological Review*, July, 1921, p. 264.

³⁹ Needless to say, this contrast between the spirit of renunciation of the early Christian tradition and the practical exigencies of the ecclesiastical organization was not peculiar to Rome. It was felt everywhere in the church, and everywhere long produced disturbing movements. It was at the root of Montanism in Asia. The hypothesis of Calder ('Philadelphia and Montanism,' *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, 1923, pp. 309-354) of the existence in Asia Minor, from the time when the Apocalypse was written, of two antagonistic missionary schools, one in the Northern provinces and spreading along the valley of the Maeander river, which emphasized the apocalyptic hope, and urged an austere morality and an uncompromising attitude toward the world, the other centring in Philadelphia, with a milder interpretation of the ethics of the Gospel, is little more than a suggestion, but it would leave room for a sufficient period of incubation to account for the sudden rise of Montanism about the middle of the second century.

of those who, whether on doctrinal grounds or in practical matters, refused to be absorbed by the law of uniformity. As a consequence of this resolute policy, new schisms were to be expected, but at least the church and its bishop would dissipate all misunderstanding and make known exactly where they stood.

The stern measures against the Asiatics were only the first step in this work of reorganizing the Roman Church. A more serious task was that of bringing order and unity into the doctrinal teaching of the community. The old Roman symbol which was in use at least from the middle of the second century shows that the official teaching of the Roman Church imposed the belief in God, Father omnipotent; in Jesus Christ, Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pilate, risen from the dead, sitting at the right of the Father, to come again as judge; and finally the belief in the Holy Ghost, and in the resurrection of the flesh. But did the Roman Church teach any official doctrine concerning the crucial problem of the specific character of Jesus Christ's divine sonship? There is no evidence of any official teaching on this point: but there is plenty of evidence of the existence in the community of the various and opposite solutions which had been formulated up to that time. Modern historians have laid great stress on the important point that there was a fundamental divergence between the simple belief of the popular Christian class and the new philosophical elaborations of the theologians. The former represented the primitive naïve juxtaposition of belief in Christ, the Saviour God of Christianity, and belief in the God of Israel, inherited from the Jewish tradition; the latter was the learned product of the contamination of the Christian tradition with the philosophical thought of the times in the attempt to bring Christianity into a larger setting and to give to it universal significance.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ On this topic a learned article has recently been published by J. Lebreton ('Le désaccord de la foi populaire et de la théologie savante dans l'Eglise chrétienne du III^e siècle,' *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, Louvain, 1923, pp. 481-506 and following number) in which are collected and analyzed important passages of third-century writers. Lebreton emphasizes the difference between the learned groups, which claimed to be the best champions of Christianity and complained of being misunderstood and suspected by the unlearned, and the popular groups led often by presbyters and bishops

But the rank and file of Christians remained more or less indifferent to the philosophical elaboration. To them Jesus Christ was the Saviour God, to Him they addressed their prayers and on Him centred their hope. God the Father, whose name they repeated in the creed, was little more than an abstraction which assumed a religious value only in so far it could be and was connected with Christ.

The traditional phrase 'Jesus Christ Son of God,' which originally derived its religious value from its moral content and implications, lent itself to concrete, mythological interpretation and to abstract, metaphysical elaboration; it was but natural that the former should appeal to the unlettered masses, and the latter to the thinkers and to those of philosophical training. A vague form of adoptionism seems to have been cur-

who considered all philosophical speculation foreign to Christianity and dangerous to faith. But besides these two classes, there were, remarks Lebreton, "*des esprits supérieurs, âmes saintes, intelligences droites et fortes, qui ne se laissent ni éblouir ni effrayer.*" Such were Irenaeus, Cyprian, and the great Roman bishops Fabian and Dionysius; they were the real representative of the true tradition (p. 491). But the most radical attempt to make of this distinction the main characteristic of the doctrinal situation in the early centuries and the key to the explanation of their peculiar forms of doctrinal development is the recent book of A. C. McGiffert, *The God of the Early Christians*, New York, 1924. According to Professor McGiffert the problem, "how to explain the addition of the worship of Christ to the worship of God," to which historians have hitherto confined themselves, is one-sided. Another problem equally pressing is, "how to explain the addition of the worship of God to the worship of Christ" (pp. 63-64). This would imply the existence of considerable sections of Christians who recognized only Jesus Christ as their God, excluding or ignoring the God of Israel inherited by Christianity. Modalism would in the last analysis represent the reaction of this purely gentile Christianity against all attempts to make of Christ a subordinate God. Their identification of the Father and the Son, suggested as it was by practical and not speculative reasons, aimed only to safeguard the uniqueness of the God Christ. The system however was philosophically unsound, and could not overcome the learned theology of the Logos (p. 108). Though it cannot be said that there is any definite evidence of the existence of such a distinct purely gentile Christianity, it is undeniable that in the consciousness of large popular Christian groups Christ was the real object of piety; yet is it necessary to assume that they altogether ignored God the Father, even if in their worship the thought of Him had but little value? The confusion in applying the term God both to the God of Israel and to Christ found in certain primitive writings would suggest the juxtaposition of the two conceptions correlated by the idea of the Sonship, rather than the denial of one of them. The theory of Professor McGiffert is however very suggestive, and with certain limitations may be adopted as a good explanation of various otherwise obscure problems of early doctrinal development.

rent among the Christians of Rome in the middle of the second century; but thereafter modalistic views, which afforded a solution easily accessible even to simple minds, and had the advantage of preserving unimpaired the absolute deity of Christ, seem to have made a strong bid for popularity. It was remarked above that practical reasons, urgent practical motives, due to the presence of so many conflicting groups in the community, had brought about a coincidence of interests and a coöperation of the monarchical bishops and the simple believers. Now did this alliance affect also the doctrinal attitude of the Roman bishops, who refused to be identified with any of the learned schools not only because of the uncertain state of the doctrines themselves, but also out of practical motives which made it inadvisable to disturb the simple faith of the crowd? Very likely.

But such an attitude could not last for ever: the process by which faith had to become a doctrine could not be stopped, and the necessity of taking sides was becoming more and more urgent. From this point of view the episcopate of Victor has greater importance than is commonly thought. At the time of his election doctrinal confusion was at its worst. The doctrine of the Logos-Christ derived great advantage from so authoritative a tradition as that of the Gospel of John; but on the other hand it was subject to the disadvantage of having been misused by Gnostics and Marcionites, whose appropriation of that doctrine could not fail to cast a shadow of suspicion on the whole terminology which had to be used in any further elaboration of it. Justin Martyr had introduced a teaching about the Logos which in the hands of his disciples and especially of Tatian seems to have assumed a Gnostic quality; at least Irenaeus affirms that Tatian held a theory of aeons and their succession similar to that of Valentinus. But in spite of all these drawbacks the Logos doctrine had strong roots in the ecclesiastical Roman tradition and was very likely the doctrine held by Victor himself. Hippolytus's respectful language in mentioning Victor, and the fact that the learned clergy of Carthage as represented by Tertullian adopted this view of the 'oeconomia' of the deity, make this probable. A tradition current among certain Roman adoptionists of the third century affirmed that

Victor, as well as some of his predecessors, professed an adoptionist doctrine; but this assumption, as the anonymous writer quoted by Eusebius remarks, seems to have had no foundation, in view of Victor's condemnation of the adoptionism of the Theodotians.⁴¹

Very likely the teaching of Victor on this point was not different from that of Irenaeus. The two men were in close relation and it was Irenaeus who called Victor's attention to the errors of Florinus and asked for the condemnation of the latter which Victor did not hesitate to pronounce. Like Irenaeus, Victor must have confined himself to mere doctrinal statements and abstained from any personal speculative contribution. The Son was God, truly God, begotten by the Father, and then united to human nature by a 'commistio' of a mysterious character. Like Irenaeus, Victor must have had a great dislike for those thinkers who pretended to explain the generation of the Logos 'quasi ipsi obstetricaverint,' and of whom it was charitable to say:

It is better and more profitable to belong to the simple and unlettered class, and by means of love to attain nearness to God, than by imagining ourselves learned and skilful to be found with those blaspheming God. . . . It is better . . . that one should search after no other knowledge except that of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who was crucified for us, than that by subtle questions and hair-splitting expressions he should fall into impiety.⁴²

At least this would be the mental attitude suggested by Victor's policy in dealing with the doctrinal movements of his time. Florinus, a presbyter who had been a disciple of Polycarp of Smyrna, and who in a long period of residence at Rome had acquired there influence and authority, began to teach a Logos doctrine which aroused the suspicions of many. It even reached the ears of Irenaeus, who took a great interest in the refutation of his former friend, writing letters and dissertations against Florinus, and urged the bishop to take severe measures against the spread of his doctrines. It is probable, as has been suggested, that Florinus was but the continuator of the school which went back to Tatian and Justin; as in the case of Tatian,

⁴¹ H. E., v. 28.

⁴² Adv. Haer. ii. 28; ii. 26.

Irenaeus accuses him of holding Valentinian theories. Whatever the fact as to this may have been, Victor condemned Florinus, but the obstinate presbyter refused to submit and organized a sect of his own, which, however, gained no considerable following and soon disappeared.⁴³

At the same time another problem came into prominence. The vague and indefinite tendencies of the simple Christians who, though they had no interest in theology, yet under the stress of the monotheistic profession of faith of their symbol instinctively tried to overcome the apparent dualism of God Christ and God the Father either by a naïve conception of a divine adoption of mythological character, or by the assumption of an identity of the two by analogy with the many pluri-nominal deities of the pagan cults, began to emerge from the

⁴³ Eusebius, *H. E.*, v. 15; 20; 28. In what the novelty of Florinus's teaching consisted is difficult to say. The titles of Irenaeus's treatises against him mentioned by Eusebius would suggest specific Gnostic doctrines. Among the Syrian fragments of Irenaeus is one which purports to be part of a letter written by Irenaeus to Victor about Florinus, "a follower of Valentinus and author of an abominable book." From this letter it appears that it was Irenaeus who called Victor's attention to the heretical character of Florinus's teaching: "Nunc autem, quia forte vos lateant libri eorum qui etiam ad nos usque pervenerunt, notum facio vobis ut pro vestra dignitate ejiciatis e medio scripta illa, opprobrium quidem afferentia in vos, quia scriptor jactaverit se unum esse e vobis" (Harvey's ed., Cambridge, 1857, II, p. 457). The connection of Florinus's teaching with the tradition which went back to Tatian and through Tatian to Justin Martyr, has been suggested by K. Karsen ('Irenaeus von Lyon und der römische Presbyter Florinus', *Der Katholik*, 1910, II, pp. 40-50; 88-105), who attempted to identify Florinus with Florens Tertullian of Carthage. This identification was strongly opposed by H. Kock ('Tertullian und der römische Presbyter Florinus', *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1912, pp. 59-83), to whom Larsten replied with a further article ('Zur Kontroverse über den angeblichen Ketzer Florinus's, *ibid.*, pp. 133-156). Kock's view, however, has been rejected on good grounds by A. Baumstark ('Die Lehre des römischen Presbyter Florinus', *ibid.*, pp. 306-319), who called attention to the exposition of Florinus's Gnostic teaching found in the 'Kitab al unvan,' an historical compilation of the Melkite chronicler Agapios, bishop of Hierapolis-Minbii in the tenth century (*Patrologia Orientalis*, tom. V, fasc. 4; VII, 4; VIII, 3. (The passage concerning Florinus is in VII, pp. 516-517, translation by Vasiliev.) By the passage of Agapios, the Gnostic character of Florinus's teaching and the impossibility of identifying him with Tertullian is strongly confirmed. But even if Karsten's assumption that Florinus's Valentinianism was a mere exaggeration of Irenaeus be rejected, his suggestion that the Logos doctrine of the school started by Justin and continued by Tatian played a part in the doctrinal controversies of Rome at that period is very valuable. Florinus may well have represented that tradition, even if in his Valentinian sympathies he went a step further than Tatian.

vagueness of mere popular unauthoritative explanations and to assume in the hands of new theologians the form and character of a doctrinal synthesis claiming philosophical and traditional value. Adoptionism and Modalism, as they appear in the late second century and at the beginning of the third, were the product of theological speculation; such were the Adoptionist system of the Theodotians, and shortly afterwards the Patripassianism of Praxeas, and finally the systematic Modalism of Sabellius. This was a new and serious complication, which could not fail to affect profoundly the policy of the bishop. On the one hand it must have increased Victor's hostility to the wave of intellectualism which was now reaching even the lower strata of the Christian population, and on the other it must have made it necessary to face more directly the doctrinal problem. The Theodotians were condemned, and they too refused to submit. But unlike Florinus, Theodotus seems to have had a large following, and the church organized by him became and remained for some time a serious competitor with that of the bishops.⁴⁴

The history of Modalism belongs to the following period and to the episcopates of Zephyrinus and Callistus: it seems to me, however, that from the point of view of the doctrinal orientation of the Roman Church, the thirty years from Victor to the death of Callistus are to be considered as forming a definite period, which taken as a whole marks the end of the long doctrinal uncertainty and cleared the way for the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Logos to become the official doctrine of the Roman Church. Victor, by condemning the philosophical su-

⁴⁴ Eusebius, H. E., v. 28. The teaching of the Adoptionist schismatic group established by Theodotus the currier was developed further by Theodotus the banker and finally by the school of Artemon. It seems that gradually the Adoptionist church of Rome became a circle of literary and learned men who not only ascribed great importance to philosophy and science, but occupied themselves with biblical studies, especially in restoring the text to supposed primitive correctness, and in grammatical and literal exegesis. The fact, however, of their choice of the ignorant confessor Natalis as their bishop at the beginning of the episcopate of Zephyrinus would suggest that this great interest in learning was not characteristic of the first Theodotian group, but a later development. It is more probable that at the beginning the group was formed of popular elements under the leadership of the new theologians.

perstructure of Florinus, which led at least to compromise with Gnosticism, and by refusing to yield to the popular pressure in favor of the new theological formulations of the Theodotians, opened the way towards that complete elimination of early christologies which was achieved by Callistus's final condemnation of Sabellius. Zephyrinus and Callistus, in spite of their hesitations and inconsistencies, if we accept Hippolytus's insinuations, are after all the continuators of Victor's policy. The words attributed by Hippolytus to Zephyrinus, when put in relation to the general situation of the doctrinal conflict of the Roman Church at the beginning of the third century, are not so naïve as is commonly thought. They undoubtedly show a state of theological hesitation, but they also show progress towards a solution. On the one hand he would affirm: "I know only one God Jesus Christ and beyond him none other who was born and who suffered"; and on the other hand he would protest: "It was not the Father who died, but the Son."⁴⁵ If these words mean anything at all they suggest the firm ecclesiastical tradition of Jesus Christ God and Son of God, a mere neutral statement of faith; but at the same time they show an advance toward a solution by denying altogether the personal identification of the suffering Son with the Father. The repudiation of Modalism and of Sabellius was but the logical outcome of this whole process of orientation begun by Victor, followed even by the ignorant Zephyrinus, and finally completed by Callistus.

But the troubles of Victor were not over; still further complications came from another side and this time on a different ground. Another group which was then acquiring importance in the Roman community was that of the Montanists. The history of early Montanism in Rome is very obscure, and has given room for the most diverse theories among modern historians.⁴⁶ What seems probable is that the movement reached

⁴⁵ *Philosophumena*, ix. 11, ed. P. Wendland, 1916, p. 246.

⁴⁶ The most comprehensive work on Montanism is still Labriolle, *La Crise Montaniste*, Paris, 1913, and his collection of the sources, *Les sources de l'histoire du Montanisme*, Paris, 1913, which have superseded both the previous study and the collection of sources of Bonwetsch (1881). A full bibliography up to 1913, is to be found in La

Rome during the first years of the episcopate of Victor's predecessor Eleutherus (174/5-189); it was not proscribed by the bishop; although there was some opposition, as is suggested by the letter of the Gallican martyrs to Eleutherus. But some time afterward a Roman bishop, as we are told by Tertullian, who does not mention his name, had decided to recognize the authenticity of the prophetic inspiration of the Montanists and had prepared and even signed letters in their favor addressed to the churches of Asia. At that moment, however, a certain Praxeas arrived from Asia and succeeded in persuading the bishop to withdraw his approval.⁴⁷

There is good reason to think that this bishop was Victor.⁴⁸ As a matter of fact Montanism at that period in Rome could

Crise, pp. vii-xx. Among recent publications the most remarkable are Faggiotto, *L'Eresia dei Frigi*, Fonti e Frammenti, Rome, 1924, and Tertulliano e la Nuova Profezia, Rome, 1924. Faggiotto subjects the sources to a new and painstaking revision, and draws from them conclusions which are in many ways different from those of Labriolle. Above all Faggiotto seems convinced that ascetic tendencies and practices did not have in the early period of the movement the importance commonly attributed to them, and that these became characteristic of Montanism only later. It was in the beginning a mere revival of prophetism based on a vivid apocalyptic expectation, and did not teach any heretical doctrines, nor take an antagonistic attitude towards the church organization. As a consequence, Faggiotto emphasizes the distinction between the first period of the New Prophecy and the second period of the Heresy of the Phrygians. Among the questions of detail concerning the sources, Faggiotto, as it seems, has solved the problem of the enigmatic Miltiades mentioned by Eusebius (H. E., v. 16), and against the common opinion, which sees in Miltiades one of the new prophets, makes of him a writer against Montanism to be identified with Miltiades the apologist (*L'Eresia dei Frigi*, pp. 25-35).

⁴⁷ Tertullian, *Adv. Praxeas* 1: "Nam idem tunc episcopum Romanum agnoscentem iam prophetias Montani, Prisca, Maximillae, et ex ea agnitione pacem ecclesiis Asiae et Phrygiae inferentem, falsa de ipsis prophetis et ecclesiis eorum adseverando et praedecessorum eius auctoritatem defendendo, coegit et litteras pacis revocare iam emissas et a proposito recipiendorum charismatum concessare." The interpretation of this passage has provoked endless discussions. A detailed analysis of the various opinions is to be found in Labriolle, *La Crise*, pp. 257-275.

⁴⁸ Eleutherus is the choice of Schwegeler, Ritschl, A. Réville, Lipsius, Bonwetsch, Duchesne; Victor is preferred by Langen, Hilgelfeld, Zahn, Voigt, Monceaux, Preuschen, Esser, Faggiotto; Labriolle proposes Zephyrinus. Leclercq simplifies the question by suggesting three successive episcopal edicts in Rome concerning the Montanists: one by Eleutherus "provoked by the letter of the confessors of Lyons (Eus. H. E., v. 3); a second by Victor provoked by the intervention of Praxeas mentioned by Tertullian; and a third by Zephyrinus provoked by the issue of the debates between Proclus and Gaius (H. E., ii. 25; iii. 28; vi. 29)" (*Hist. d. Conciles*, I, p. 133, note). As a matter of fact, what complicates this whole question is Tertullian's affirmation that Praxeas

not be called a heresy: it did not attack any specific Christian doctrine, and it professed complete adherence to the body of traditional Christian teaching. As a reaction against the intellectualism of the theologians who caused so much trouble to the Roman community, Montanism would have caused no ill feelings in the ranks of that large party which had no interest in theological quarrels and was opposed to the spirit of doctrinal controversies. At the same time the austerity of the new prophets, in that period apparently beyond suspicion, could not fail to make a favorable impression on the pious element of the community. On the other hand, the individualistic spirit inseparable from a prophetic régime was a menace to the rights of the hierarchy, and if perceived could not but repel a man like Victor, whose program aimed above all at the restoration of Christian unity in his church by strengthening the hierarchical principle of authority and government.⁴⁹

"coegit" the Roman bishop "praedecessorum eius auctoritatem defendendo." These words are interpreted as meaning that at least two of the predecessors of the bishop had already passed an unfavorable judgment on the new prophecy. If therefore Victor was the bishop in question, it would follow that Soter and Eleutherus had condemned Montanism. This assumption seems to receive confirmation from the passage of the 'Liber Praedestinatus' which says that Soter wrote a treatise, or a letter, against the Cataphrygians (i. 26). But the Praedestinatus, a compilation of the late fifth century, has been shown to be entirely untrustworthy on all kinds of historical information, and strong chronological reasons make it impossible for Soter to have taken any part in this controversy. It seems that Montanism did not reach Rome and was not discussed there before the year 177 under Eleutherus (Faggiotto, *La Diaspora*, pp. 39-40). That Eleutherus was concerned with the question is undeniable, since to him among others the confessors of Lyons sent their appeal for the peace of the church. But that Eleutherus issued a definite condemnation of Montanism is unlikely. If such had been the case, there would have been no need for his successor to pass a new judgment; the hesitation and still more the approval of Victor would be a puzzle. We must admit that an explicit condemnation of Montanism on the part of Rome had not occurred when Praxeas urged the bishop to withdraw his letter of approval of the new prophecy. That being so, what is the value of Tertullian's obscure statement? It seems to me that in view of these difficulties it is impossible to assign to it a specific meaning, or to see in it a direct reference to the Montanist problem. It remains to interpret it in a general way, and to assume that Praxeas urged the Roman bishop not to depart from the policy of his predecessors, who had always been opposed to the introduction of novelties in the church.

⁴⁹ It is well to keep in mind the wise remark of P. Batiffol: "L'épiscopat ne prenait pas ombrage de la persistance des charismes prophétiques. Comme au temps de Saint Paul, on jugeait le prophète d'abord à sa sainteté, et tout autant à sa soumission à la hiérarchie. Le montanisme ne proclamait aucune nouveauté, quand il disait: Il faut

It is probable, however, that up to that time Montanism in Rome had not taken an attitude antagonistic to the hierarchy, for it was seeking the latter's approval. One can easily understand the hesitation of Victor on this account. If the narrative of Tertullian is trustworthy and refers to Victor, this hesitation was at first overcome, and a decision reached in favor of Montanism. This fits well with Victor's policy, which had set out to clear the field of all equivocations and ambiguities. It is possible also that the attitude of the Asiatic bishops who had refused to accept Victor's decision on the celebration of Easter, and from whom he had withdrawn communion, may have affected Victor's feelings in the matter, since they were exactly the bishops who now condemned Montanism and called upon other bishops in the church to condemn it. On the one hand, the lack of peremptory reasons, either doctrinal or disciplinary, for the condemnation of the Roman Montanists, and on the other, the necessity of establishing a definite policy, together with feelings of irritation against the Asiatic bishops, would fully explain the fact that Victor was brought to recognize the legitimacy of the new prophecy.⁵⁰

But in Asia Montanism had already assumed the character of an anti-hierarchical movement, and had developed the prac-

recevoir les charismes et qu'il y ait des charismes dans l'Église. (Epiph., Haer., 48, 2.) La nouveauté du montanisme fut de vouloir imposer ses révélations particulières comme un supplément au dépôt de la foi, et de vouloir les accrédi-ter par des extases suspectes et des convulsions" (L'Église naissante, 9th ed., 1922, p. 264). But even so, "La décision à prendre était complexe: il fallait sauvegarder le principe de l'action surnaturelle de l'Esprit, et en même temps le définir" (ibid., p. 266).

⁵⁰ Labriolle remarks on this point: "C'est bien gratuitement que l'on suppose chez Victor cette étrange disposition, aussi peu charitable que possible, qui l'aurait induit à susciter à l'épiscopat d'Asie des difficultés très graves pour le plaisir d'exercer sa vengeance contre lui, et pour le punir de ses résistances dans la question pascale. On prête à ce caractère obstiné et violent des procédés mesquins qui ne lui vont guère" (La Crise, p. 273). To put the question in this way is to misunderstand the situation. It was not a petty vengeance, but rather a question of principle which involved the right of each bishop to pass judgment on controversies affecting his own church, according to the local situation and not according to the exigencies of other churches. The bishops of Asia, in the name of their local autonomy and their local needs, had refused to coöperate with Victor for the pacification of his own community in the Easter question; it was natural that in the question of Montanism Victor should adopt the same policy with reference to the local situation in Rome, which made him feel an approval of the new prophecy to be desirable.

tical implications of the prophetic claim, degenerating into a spiritual and ecclesiastical anarchy. Praxeas, coming thence, opened the eyes of Victor to the serious consequences of an official recognition of the movement. The letters ready to be sent were withdrawn and judgment was held in suspense.

Recognition was not granted, but no condemnation was pronounced. This episode of the Montanists must have taken place about the end of Victor's episcopate and is no less instructive than his quarrel with the Asiatics on the question of Easter. It presents another side of the same conflict concerning inter-church relations, and throws still more light on Victor's conception of his episcopal authority and of the responsibilities of his office. Montanism had early provoked in Asia the resistance of the hierarchy: the episcopate of the province was rightly concerned at seeing the movement degenerate into a fanatical outburst and at hearing the claims of the new prophets who assumed the right to represent the Paraclete and to be above all hierarchical authority. They condemned these extravagant claims and initiated a vigorous campaign against the Phrygian prophets.

Was the verdict of the Asiatic bishops to be accepted without discussion by bishops elsewhere in whose communities Montanist groups had been formed? Was the judgment of his Eastern colleagues binding on the bishop of the Christian community of Rome? It was fundamentally the same question of principle that had provoked the clash between Victor and the Asiatic bishops over the date of Easter; but this time the situation was inverted, the condemnation came from Asia. There is no statement that the bishops of Asia had sent a request to Victor or to the Roman bishop to follow their example and condemn Montanism, but even so, why did not the head of the Christian community of Rome feel the duty of joining those bishops in the condemnation of Montanism?⁵¹

⁵¹ It is commonly surmised that the Montanists of Asia had asked for the intervention of the bishop of Rome ("Il dut y avoir, de la part des Montanistes, un nouvel effort pour se faire reconnaître à Rome, car pour quoi le pape aurait-il pris l'initiative d'un tel acte?" Labriolle, *La Crise*, p. 260), and that their appeal to Rome shows that the consciousness of the superior authority of the Roman bishop was already present in the

The first and obvious reason is the fact that Montanism had not everywhere taken the same extreme character as in the land of its birth; in Rome it was still a mild prophetic revival, stressing more the principle of ascetic conduct and the apocalyptic hope but remaining faithful both to the traditional doctrine and to the organization. Moreover, while in Asia entire communities had turned Montanists, and the whole Asiatic church was in a turmoil, in Rome the group was small and did not need at that moment to be taken very seriously, especially by a bishop who was confronted with more urgent problems and much more dangerous movements and schisms. To be sure, Victor's ignorance of the real situation in Asia must be taken into account in explaining his first and favorable decision, in the same way that Praxeas's report explains the withdrawal of the recognition; but that does not explain the fact that Victor did not feel in duty bound to go further and join the Asiatic bishops in the condemnation of Montanism.

Here again we find at bottom the same reasons which had prompted Victor's aggressive attitude in the question of Easter. Montanism transplanted to Rome had become an internal problem of the Church of Rome, to be solved by the bishop of the Roman community. And since in Rome it appeared harmless and rather helpful in raising the standard of morals and counteracting the propaganda of Gnostics and heretics, it could be approved. This approval, suggested by local reasons, would

whole church. "Notez, avec M. Harnack, qu'il ne s'agissait pas là de Montanistes romains, mais que les Montanistes de Phrygie et d'Asie étaient visiblement en instance pour se faire reconnaître, eux et le principe de la nouvelle prophétie: le jugement de Rome leur importait donc!" (Batiffol, *L'Église naissante*, p. 267). It is very likely that the Montanists of Asia were doing their best to enlist the support not only of the Roman Church, but also of the bishops of the communities where Montanism had found followers. But to see in this a manifestation of definite principles affecting the hierarchical government of the church as a whole, is a rather far-fetched conclusion. No less arbitrary is it to exclude from the controversy the Montanists of Rome and to assume that those of Asia were the only ones concerned in the decisions of the Roman bishop. The approval of the Roman bishop, communicated in the prepared but not yet delivered letter, concerned Montanism as a whole; it was an approval of the new prophecy as represented by the Roman groups as well as by the other groups everywhere. It is therefore natural to surmise that the Roman Montanists, both in their own interest and in the interest of their Asiatic brethren, urged the bishop of Rome to make known his approval in the hope of overcoming the opposition of the bishops of Asia.

again affect the church at large as had been the case with Victor's decision on the celebration of Easter; wherefore letters for expedition to the churches of Asia were prepared and signed. A new clash between Rome and the East was imminent. Praxeas's timely arrival prevented a serious mistake on the part of the Roman bishop, but did not bring about the condemnation of Montanism. Victor's policy was short-sighted, since even in Rome the new prophetism could not fail to develop into a movement against the hierarchy; but it shows the spirit of independence of the Roman bishop, the consciousness of his right to pass judgment on questions concerning his own community from the point of view of the interests and the situation of his own church even against the judgment of other churches, and his unwillingness to accept the judgments of other bishops when not justified in his eyes by the situation which he found in his own church.

In any case there is no doubt that practical reasons of much weight at the moment must have suggested Victor's attitude towards Montanism. As a matter of fact, at the end of his episcopate Victor could not flatter himself that he had succeeded in his attempt to unify the Roman community and firmly establish his authority as a monarchical bishop. After several years of remarkable efforts to destroy the groups which refused to follow the directions and laws of his episcopal government, Victor had the bitter disappointment of seeing three more groups of rebels raise their head before his eyes and as a consequence of his own policy: the group of those who followed the Asiatic custom in the celebration of Easter with their own bishop Blastus; the group of the Theodotians, who a few years later appear with a bishop of their own, the confessor Natalis; and the group of Florinus. When we add to these probably two groups of Marcionites and three or four more groups of Gnostics, it is evident that about the end of his episcopate, Victor saw in Rome some ten Christian bishops, or heads of independent groups and schools, all claiming to represent exclusively the true Christian tradition. The hesitation of Victor in the question of the Montanists may be easily understood: it must have seemed a rash and unwise policy to provoke by a hasty con-

demnation the formation of still another group of rebels, while there was not as yet sufficient reason to repudiate them so far as the community of Rome was concerned.⁵²

If Victor's policy were to be judged by the immediate results of his various condemnations of heretics, we should say that it was a failure. But though it may have appeared so to Victor himself and to his contemporaries, the historian of today, looking at those events in the light of the later development of pontifical authority in the church, must conclude that it was on the contrary a definite step toward the unification of the community. The exclusion of all the elements which could not be assimilated, even if it temporarily reduced the numerical strength of those who gathered around Victor, yet in the long run was a great benefit; by clearly defining the issues their exclusion added to the vitality of the institution.

Moreover, all these heretical sects that had gained a foothold in Rome were conducting a work of propaganda in many other churches, East and West. In their attempt to conquer the churches of the provinces, they carried the mark of disapproval impressed upon them by the Roman bishops. The communities where new branches of heretical churches were seeking to spread, could not be ignorant that the cause of the dissenters was already lost, and that they had been rejected by such an important and authoritative church as that of Rome. The heretics themselves thus became unwillingly the instrument of the rapid growth and expansion of the authority of the Roman Church. The remote historical origin of that extremely im-

⁵² The hesitation of Victor may receive some further light by comparing it with the attitude of Irenaeus toward Montanism. Irenaeus was the man who as a presbyter of the Church of Lyons brought to Rome the letter of the Gallican martyrs to Eleutherus, a touching appeal for the peace of the church and, as it seems, a warning against a hasty condemnation of the new prophecy. In his *'Adversus Haereses'* Irenaeus does not mention the Montanists, although in one passage he indirectly refers to the false prophets who deny that the church possesses the prophetic charismata (iii. 11, 9). Evidently what Irenaeus condemned was the claim, made by some fanatics of the new prophecy, to the sole possession of the Paraclete; but at the time when he wrote, that is to say under Eleutherus in Rome, he had no reason to condemn the whole movement or to consider it as a heresy or even a schism. A few years later under Victor the situation in Rome must have been still the same, and his attitude would not have been very different from that of Irenaeus.

portant institution of Christianity, the Roman primacy, is to be found in this peculiar situation of the Christian community of the capital. It is not historically exact to say that the Roman bishops assumed from the beginning the right to interfere with matters concerning other churches and to dictate laws and regulations. Such a view is inconsistent with the known facts pointing to a period of development of the monarchical episcopate even in Rome itself, and with the existence of theories about the nature of episcopal authority which found an eloquent exponent in Cyprian, when the Roman bishops had already gone some way on the path which was to lead them to supremacy.

The fact was that the many problems which concerned so many churches were at the same time problems of the Roman community. When, therefore, the Roman bishops sought a solution of them, in order to safeguard the organization and unity of their own church, and excluded the dissidents from their communion, these solutions and these condemnations created a precedent which could not be ignored or challenged by other bishops or churches without arousing the resentment and resistance of Rome. The Roman bishops were bound to uphold in the whole church their decisions taken originally under the pressure of local needs and circumstances, and to make them prevail in other churches, where the same heretics and dissidents had organized, or came to organize, new groups and heretical churches. So it came that the authority of the Roman bishop had to be reckoned with in the church at large even before any theory had been advanced to clothe it with a divine right. And, as we have seen, it was under Victor that this process of expansion of Roman influence began to assume a definite form and to give rise to a tradition which was destined to play a part of capital importance in the history of Christianity.⁵³

⁵³ The famous passage of Irenaeus: "Ad hanc enim ecclesiam [Rome] propter potentiores principatus necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio" (iii. 3), which has been the subject of so many discussions and interpretations, might take on a more definite value if understood in the light of the situation in Rome about the end of the second century, as we have tried to describe it.

In spite of the internal conflicts which we have mentioned, the ten years of Victor's episcopate were a period of intense and very successful Christian propaganda among the population of Rome. Under Commodus Christianity was little disturbed, and according to the well-known words of Eusebius, "the doctrine of salvation led at that time the souls of men of all races to the pious religion of the Lord of the universe, so that even then many Romans well distinguished for their wealth and their high birth went towards salvation with all their household and their relatives."⁵⁴ After making allowance for some exaggeration as to the numbers of those converts, there is no reason to doubt that Eusebius's statement is substantially true. As a matter of fact, archaeological evidence shows conclusively that several members of famous Roman families were converted to Christianity during the latter part of the second century.⁵⁵

There is no evidence that men of the old or new senatorial nobility embraced Christianity in any considerable number before the time of Constantine, but during the whole second

Undoubtedly the phraseology is strange, but when we reflect that what we have is a translation, the repetition of 'undique' in an awkward clause is not necessarily the sign of a scribal error, as Dom Morin has suggested. It seems to me that the clause 'ab his qui sunt undique' might well be understood as referring to the composite character of the Roman community, where so many various groups represented the various traditions of Christianity which, according to Irenaeus, fundamentally agreed (*Adv. Haer. i. 10, 2*). The preceding clause, 'hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles,' is an explanation of the meaning of the term 'omnem ecclesiam' and though 'undique' might have been improperly used for 'ubique,' there can be little doubt that it means 'the faithful who are in all the Christian communities.' The general sense would then be: 'with the Church of Rome must agree every church, that is to say all the faithful from every community, because in the Church of Rome by those who have gone there from all communities the apostolic tradition has always been kept unchanged.' The 'potentior principalitas' of the Roman Church could then be understood as referring not only to its priority in time, but also to its being the representative not of a single local tradition but of the tradition of the whole church, on account of the composite character of the Roman community. See Batiffol, *L'Église naissante*, pp. 250-252, and *Le Catholicisme de Saint Augustine*, 1920, p. 102, in which he revises his earlier opinion on the meaning of 'principalis,' found in a similar phrase ('ecclesia principalis') of Cyprian and usually interpreted as that of Irenaeus. On this point see A. D'Alès, *La Théologie de Saint Cyprien*, Paris, 1922, pp. 389-395.

⁵⁴ H. E., v. 21.

⁵⁵ A complete account of the discoveries of De Rossi and of subsequent archaeological discoveries throwing light on the Christian aristocratic families of Rome is presented by Dom Leclercq in art. 'Aristocratiques (Classes)' *DACL. I*, 2845-2886.

century conversions of aristocratic ladies were numerous. Their membership in the church was eagerly sought in particular because of the assistance they could offer to the poor and in securing burial places for the dead of the community.⁵⁶ In the time of Commodus Victor succeeded even in gaining the support of influential members of the imperial circle, and especially of Marcia the emperor's concubine. Through her good offices he obtained the release of the Christians who under Marcus Aurelius had been condemned to the mines of Sardinia.

An elder of the Church, Hyacinthus, who seems to have been in some way personally related to Marcia, was sent to the island with an imperial order of release for the prisoners, of whom a list had been prepared by Victor. He brought back the confessors to Rome, and among them Callistus, a former slave and future bishop of Rome. Hippolytus affirms that Callistus's name was not on the list, because he had been condemned for common crimes, and that Hyacinthus took pity on him and secured his release from the governor of Sardinia on the authority of his own connection with Marcia.⁵⁷ This episode is very significant. It shows that Marcia's name could be used successfully by Christians in persuading a Roman officer to disregard the regulations of his office for the benefit of members of the Christian community. And it may throw an indirect light upon another and more complicated problem which belongs to the history of Victor's episcopate.

There are valid reasons for believing that Victor was the first Roman bishop to adopt a new policy in the administration of the Christian cemeteries. Up to that time the Christians had secured for their use the private cemeteries of wealthy families of their community. These, even when used by the Christians, remained the private property of those families, and did not belong to the community, since a proscribed religion or association could not acquire property or enjoy any of the rights granted to the religious or funerary corporations recognized by

⁵⁶ Celsus had already made this remark (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 44, 55), and Hippolytus says the same thing against the Callistians (*Philos.* ix. 12).

⁵⁷ *Philos.* ix. 12. On the assumed Christian profession of Marcia, see *DACL.* I, 2860-2863.

the law. About this time, however, it seems that the Church of Rome finally succeeded in acquiring legal possession of a cemetery on the Appian Way, still known under the name of the Catacomb of Callistus.⁵⁸

For a long time the tradition prevailed that Callistus was the original founder of this catacomb, but archaeological discoveries and the studies of the famous J. B. De Rossi led to the conclusion that the cemetery was already in existence before Callistus, that it was Bishop Zephyrinus who acquired the property for the church and entrusted its administration and its development to Callistus, then a deacon. The name of Callistus was appropriately given to the catacomb, since extensive works under his care, first as superintendent, and then as bishop after Zephyrinus's death, caused it to become the greatest Christian cemetery of Rome.⁵⁹ Of this enlargement by Callistus there is no doubt, but that the cemetery was acquired for the church by Callistus, or indeed by Zephyrinus, seems to me a theory lacking sufficient evidence.

The contentions on which rests the claim in behalf of Callistus and Zephyrinus, as stated by De Rossi and the archaeologists who follow his theory, may be summarized as follows:

1. The occasion which made it possible for the Church of

⁵⁸ The historical evidence that about the middle of the third century the Church of Rome had for a long time been in legal possession of cemeteries was gathered and analyzed by De Rossi (*Roma Sotterranea*, i, pp. 101 ff.). J. P. Kirsch ('*Die christliche Cultusgebäude in der vorkonstantinischen Zeit*,' in *Festschrift d. deutschen Campo Santo in Rom*, Freiburg, 1897, pp. 6-20) collected numbers of texts giving evidence that about the end of the second century or the beginning of the third the Christians had special meeting-places for their religious cult and that these places, even in the eyes of the government, belonged to the Christian communities. But how was it possible for a persecuted religion to enjoy the right of possession of cemeteries and meeting-places is difficult to explain. Tillemont was the first to suppose that in the period of Severus Alexander (222-235), who is described by his biographer Lampridius as very sympathetic to the Christians, the church obtained a certain legal recognition. With better reasons De Rossi was led to set the date earlier, and pointed to the period of Septimius Severus as the one most likely to have offered to the church the opportunity to act as a legal corporation.

⁵⁹ *Roma Sott.*, II. The whole second volume of this monumental work consists of a detailed description and history of the Catacombs of Callistus. For all subsequent discoveries and studies see the collections of the *Bullettino* and of the *Nuovo Bullettino di archeologia cristiana*, Rome, 1863-1923, and the monograph of Leclercq, *DACL*, II, 1665-1774.

Rome to acquire a legal title of possession of the cemetery is to be found in the edict of Severus confirming and extending to the provinces of the empire the privileges granted to the funerary associations. The date of this rescript falls within the episcopate of Zephyrinus.

2. Under Zephyrinus the Christians in Rome formed funerary associations, such as were allowed by the law, and thus obtained recognition of their property-right over the cemetery.

3. Under Zephyrinus the ancient Vatican cemetery, where all his predecessors were buried, was closed and a new *crypta papalis* built in the catacomb of Callistus; and there Zephyrinus himself was laid to rest at his death.

4. For a time the catacomb was called 'the cemetery of Zephyrinus' in memory of its real founder, and only later was his name superseded by that of Callistus.

These assumptions seem to me far from exact and conclusive, and I think that stronger arguments may be brought in favor of the theory that the acquisition of the new property in the name of the church took place in the episcopate of Victor. First of all, it is not exact to say that Severus's rescript in favor of the *collegia tenuiorum* falls within Zephyrinus's episcopate. As De Rossi himself remarks, the rescript was issued in the name of Septimius Severus alone, not under the joint names of Septimius and Caracalla. Now there is no doubt, according to recent historical investigations, that Caracalla was raised to the position of caesar and emperor designatus in 196, and that rescripts under both names are found as early as 197. The rescript for the funerary associations must therefore have been issued between 192, the year of Septimius's accession, and 196, the year of the proclamation of Caracalla, that is to say, it falls within the episcopate of Victor, which lasted until 198/9.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Caracalla became caesar in 196 after the last surrender of Niger's party and at the beginning of the new war against Albinus. Spartianus's statement is confirmed by numismatic evidence. It was at the time when Caracalla was made caesar and emperor designatus that he assumed also the name of Antoninus, and not in 198 as Lampridius says. This is also confirmed by numismatic evidence (Platnauer, pp. 103, 124, n. 3; Hasebroek pp. 86-90; De Ruggero, *Dizion. Epigr.* II, p. 197). The two earlier rescripts in which Caracalla appears as joint ruler with Septimius are dated in the Digest, January 1, 196 (Cod. Just., ix. 41, 1), and June 30, 196 (iv. 19, 1). Since, however,

But even if it be granted that the rescript of Severus might have come too late to be used by Victor, to explain through it the change in the policy of cemeterial administration of the church is to exaggerate the importance of the rescript, as if it had introduced new legislation. It did not; it simply confirmed privileges already in existence. The text still to be found in the Digest says: "*divus quoque Severus praescripsit*," which proves, as Waltzing remarks, that similar rescripts had before been published.⁶¹ As a matter of fact, the great period of development of the *collegia tenuiorum* began with Marcus Aurelius and continued to the Severi, under whom they spread also through Italy and the western provinces. In the East they remained unknown; in the West their number decreased during the third century, to disappear entirely in the fourth. It would, therefore, have been as possible and easy for Victor to organize a Christian funerary association in Rome before the publication of Severus's rescript as for Zephyrinus to do so after it.

But after all, the value of this rescript in relation to the acquisition of the cemetery by the church depends upon the assumption that the Roman Christian community formed funerary associations and were registered in the books of the *praefectura urbana* as *collegia tenuiorum* thus evading the laws against Christian religious associations. Now this is very far from being certain; the circumstantial evidence gathered by De Rossi is altogether weak, and no further light has been thrown on this point by any of the important archaeological discoveries made since his death. His theory, at first adopted with enthusiasm by historians, has been almost completely demolished by the attacks of authoritative scholars and archaeologists, and the prevalent theory now is that formulated by Duchesne that under Commodus the Christian community of Rome was tolerated, obtained a certain recognition, and was allowed to acquire property, not by use of the legal fiction of a

Caracalla was saluted caesar only in September of 196, both dates are wrong and must be shifted to the following year (Platnauer, p. 103, n. 3). At any rate the rescript of the *collegia tenuiora* must have been published at least three years before Victor's death.

⁶¹ Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles des Romains, I, pp. 141-153, and art. 'Collegia,' in DACL. III, 2112-2113.

funerary association but as a church, that is to say as a religious association.⁶²

But whether the Christians formed funerary associations or not, it is obvious that the acquisition of property in the name of a Christian association could happen only in a period of great tolerance and of a friendly attitude of the government toward the Christians. Even De Rossi himself and his staunchest followers, such as Dom Leclercq, admit that the subterfuge of being registered as funerary associations could not deceive the government, and that the permit was granted by the Roman officers in full knowledge that it was asked by the Christian community and for the purpose of providing a burial ground for Christians.⁶³

Now in the whole history of the last quarter of the second century and the first decades of the third the only period in which such a thing may reasonably be supposed to have taken place is that of the last years of Commodus and the first years of Severus, roughly the decade from 186 to 196, which falls chiefly within the episcopate of Victor. The martyrdom of Apollonius in 183-185 marks the last case known with certainty of a death penalty upon a confessed Christian inflicted in Rome under Commodus,⁶⁴ and at the other extreme the

⁶² Duchesne (*Histoire ancienne de l'Église*, I, pp. 381-387, and in earlier publications) and Schulze (*De christianorum veterum rebus sepulcralibus*, Gotha, 1879) were the first seriously to attack De Rossi's theory, which is also rejected by such authoritative scholars in the field of early Christian history as Batiffol, Harnack, Sohm, and Kirsch. One of the most competent writers on the subject of the Roman *collegia*, Waltzing, has also rejected it. The theory of De Rossi, however, is still followed by many Roman archaeologists and by Dom Leclercq. A detailed exposition and discussion of the two theories with reference to the sources and complete bibliography is found in *DACL.*, articles 'Agape,' 'Area,' 'Calliste,' 'Catacombes' by Leclercq, and article 'Collegia' by Waltzing.

⁶³ Waltzing, after having remarked: "De Rossi ne soutient pas seulement que le gouvernement laissait se commettre une fraude légale, mais qu'il y prêtait lui-même les mains, qu'il était de connivence avec les contravenants, puisqu' il leur reconnaissait formellement les privilèges des collèges funéraires," concludes that to simplify the juridical question it is better to assume outright that the government "fermait les yeux sur une catégorie d'associations religieuses sans leur conférer aucun droit, et il leur permettait de vivre sous le régime du droit commun, comme à beaucoup d'associations religieuses, professionnelles et autres" (*DACL.* III, 2115-2116).

⁶⁴ After the discovery of the Greek and of the Armenian text of the *Acta Apollonii* the fact of his martyrdom in Rome under Commodus is commonly admitted. Not,

persecution of the Christians of Carthage in 197 marks the beginning of the hostile policy of Severus against the church.⁶⁵ If there was a period in which the Roman magistrates could and would ignore the usual procedure against the Christians, and deal with their associations, either under an assumed funerary character or otherwise, as if they were not banned by the law, it was the period of Victor, the same period in which the bishop was able to obtain the release of Christian prisoners and in which Hyacinthus, by merely pronouncing the name of Marcia, could persuade the Roman governor of Sardinia to free a state prisoner without any superior authorization.

It is altogether unlikely that the same attitude could have been taken by the Roman magistrates in the time of Zephyrinus. Plautianus, who governed Rome in the absence of Severus, was avowedly an enemy of Christianity, and after the publication of the edict of 201, by which Severus tried to check Christian propaganda altogether, the persecution assumed a more and more severe character. The next period of respite came with the reign of Severus Alexander,⁶⁶ but at that time the cemetery of Callistus was already developed and had been a possession of the church for several years.

And now let us turn to the more important question of the archaeological evidence. Of the three large *areae* which form the great catacombs of Callistus only the first goes back to that period and is properly called by his name. The long and painstaking studies of J. B. De Rossi and his brother Michael De Rossi led by sound reasoning to the conclusion that the first *area* of the cemetery, established on a *praedium* belonging originally to the family of the Caecilii, underwent before the time of Callistus three successive stages of enlargement. The

however, the legend that Apollonius was a senator and that his trial took place before the Senate. A full account of the complicated problem of Apollonius's trial is given in DACL. art. 'Droit persecuteur,' IV, 1633-1648; bibliography, *ibid.*, Nos. 4-14).

⁶⁵ Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 1, 7.

⁶⁶ The searching criticism of K. Bihlmeyer (*Die syrischen Kaiser zu Rom und das Christentum*, 1916) on Lampridius's biography of Alexander has greatly reduced the value of this witness to the friendly attitude of the emperor toward Christianity and to the assumed Christian influences upon his religious thinking, so much emphasized by many historians, as for instance by P. Allard, *Histoire des Persécutions*, II, pp. 183-205.

first was coincident with the foundation of the hypogeum of the Caecilii, and may go back to the time of Marcus Aurelius. The second series of works took place undoubtedly under Commodus, and many Christians were then buried there. But the need for still more space was urgent, and during the last years of Commodus or the first years of Severus a deep staircase was built in order to dig new galleries at a lower level; the ground, however, proved too friable and the plan was abandoned.⁶⁷ Later, when Callistus assumed the control of the cemetery, he continued the work in another direction and carried out a more important series of extensive works in this third section of the first *area* of the catacombs.

It is therefore undeniable that the hypogeum of the Caecilii began to be used extensively as a Christian cemetery under the episcopate of Victor. The names and trade-marks on the bricks used in the construction of the staircase which closes the second stage of works of the catacomb afford conclusive evidence that they belong to the period of Victor. De Rossi affirms emphatically that this evidence "is so eloquent that all doubts on this point must be set aside."⁶⁸ Dom Leclercq states still more explicitly: "The chronology of the trade-marks of the bricks does not permit in any way the assignment of these early works to the time when Callistus was superintendent of the catacomb. When he took office he found already a great number of tombs there in the galleries."⁶⁹

But in spite of the undeniable fact that the place was already a considerable Christian cemetery under Victor, archaeologists and historians, following De Rossi, have agreed that it became

⁶⁷ Roma Sott., II, pp. 240-244.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 244. The bricks used in the corridor leading to the staircase and in the staircase itself all have the trade-mark of two fishes and the inscription, 'Opus doliarum ex praediis domini nostri et figulinis novis.' This trade-mark is well known to archaeologists; it belonged to the imperial brick-factories of the time of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. "The constant uniformity of the bricks used in a construction is an evident proof," says De Rossi, "that they were new bricks coming from the factories and form a sure index of the date of the construction." When old material was used, we commonly find a mixture of bricks belonging to various periods and to different factories. The staircase, therefore, was built either during the last years of Commodus or shortly after his death (ibid., p. 241).

⁶⁹ DACL. II, 1696.

a property of the church only under Zephyrinus, when Callistus was put in charge of it. The theory of De Rossi is that the hypogeum of the Caecilii was started, or at least began to be used by Christians, when the martyr Caecilia, a member of that illustrious family executed under Marcus Aurelius, was buried there. Following the Christian custom many Christians obtained permission to be laid to rest near the relics of the martyr, and thus the cemetery developed in the same manner as all other early Christian catacombs established in the burial grounds of private families.⁷⁰ Later, as we have said, it is supposed that under Zephyrinus the Christians formed a special funerary *collegium* of which the deacon Callistus was officially the syndic, and took possession of the cemetery as a corporation recognized by law.

Unfortunately this theory of the great Roman archaeologist is based on very doubtful evidence. His learned effort to prove that Caecilia's martyrdom took place under Marcus Aurelius falls short of being conclusive. Her Acts are a late forgery; the chronological and historical indications contained in them are obviously erroneous. As a matter of fact, at the present stage of hagiographical studies, there is so large a variety of opinions about the time of Caecilia's martyrdom as to cover the whole range of Roman history from Marcus Aurelius to Julian the Apostate. The date which seems more probable is that of Diocletian's persecution.⁷¹ The martyr Caecilia, then, had nothing to do with the beginning of the catacombs of Callistus. The only positive conclusions of De Rossi on this early period of the history of the catacomb are (1) that it was established on the property of the Caecilii, and (2) that it was used as a Christian cemetery under Victor, even if it did not as yet contain the tomb of the famous martyr. Why then must this passage of the right of property from the family of the Caecilii to the church be assigned to the time of Zephyrinus and not to the time of Victor?

⁷⁰ Roma Sott. II, Introd. chap. 2, pp. xxii-xliii, 113-161, 361-365.

⁷¹ DACL. II, 1691, n. 1; 2712-2738.

The sources of information on this event so far available are as follows. (1) The narrative of Hippolytus in the *Philosophumena*. (2) The indications of the *Liber Pontificalis*. (3) The archaeological evidence of the so-called *crypta papalis* of the Catacomb of Callistus. The narrative of Hippolytus contains only the statement: "After Victor's death, Zephyrinus, . . . sending for Callistus from Antium, set him over the cemetery."⁷² De Rossi remarked that the fact that Hippolytus calls the place merely 'the cemetery' without any further qualification is significant. There were many Christian cemeteries called by the names of their early proprietors or by those of famous persons and martyrs buried in them; if this one is called simply 'the cemetery,' in the singular, that means that it was the only one which belonged to the church and so was differentiated from all others. It is, however, probable, De Rossi suggests, that the cemetery was already called the cemetery of Callistus, and that Hippolytus, who hated Callistus's memory, purposely omitted to call it by his opponent's name.⁷³

It seems to me that if this laconic mention of the fact can prove anything, it is that the cemetery was already the property of the church when Callistus was entrusted with its management. The three parts of the sentence, 'after Victor's death,' 'sent for Callistus from Antium,' 'set him over the cemetery,' are related as consecutive stages of the act by which Callistus coming from Antium took charge of the cemetery. 'The cemetery,' then, was the name by which it was called at

⁷² *Philos.* ix. 12 (ed. Wendland, p. 248). The whole passage reads as follows: "After [Victor's] falling asleep, Zephyrinus having selected [Callistus] as assistant in the government [reformation?] of the clergy, honored him to his own detriment, and calling him back from Antium set him over the cemetery."

⁷³ *Roma Sott.*, I, p. 197; II, p. 370; *Bull. arch. crist.*, 1867, pp. 8-12. Dom Leclercq (*DACL*, II, 1693) comments on the passage from Hippolytus as follows: "A la fin du II^e siècle il ne peut venir à l'esprit de personne de supposer que la communauté chrétienne de Rome ne possédait qu'un seul cimetière, en ce cas, pourquoi ne pas dire que Calliste fut préposé à la direction d'un cimetière, ou de l'un des cimetières?" The logical answer to this question seems to be that the term 'the cemetery' was used without qualification because it belonged already to the community when Callistus assumed its management. But on the contrary, the answer of Leclercq is that at that time it did not belong to the community, but was acquired later by Callistus. Then what becomes of the value of the evidence?

that time, since the name of Callistus was added only much later, after the many years of his administration. Granted that the phrase 'the cemetery' has the meaning attributed to it by De Rossi, it is logical to assume that the catacomb was already the property of the church at Victor's death, at the time of the event mentioned by Hippolytus in connection with which he uses the significant absolute term 'the cemetery.' But whatever the fact might have been, this passage of Hippolytus cannot be construed as meaning or implying that the cemetery became a church property under Zephyrinus and by the act of Callistus.

The *Liber Pontificalis* has this brief note about Callistus: "*Qui fecit alium cymiterium via Appia, ubi multi sacerdotes et martyres requiescunt, qui appellatur usque in hodierno die cymiterium Callisti.*"⁷⁴ Since it is beyond doubt that Callistus was not the founder of the cemetery, this passage only shows that in time a tradition arose which wrongly attributed to him the establishment of the catacombs bearing his name; and it throws no light on the problem. More important is the passage which says of Zephyrinus: "*sepultus est in cymiterio suo iuxta cymiterium Callisti, via Appia.*"⁷⁵ This passage is puzzling; it seems to imply that there was a cemetery near to but different from that of Callistus and called the cemetery of Zephyrinus. If there were definite evidence that the cemetery of Callistus was once called the cemetery of Zephyrinus, it would be a valuable argument in support of the opinion that Zephyrinus has something to do with the acquisition of the cemetery. But the passage quoted above is far from affording this evidence; it would prove on the contrary that the so-called cemetery of Zephyrinus was not the cemetery of Callistus. To overcome this difficulty an ingenious theory was formulated by De Rossi.

According to his conclusions, Zephyrinus was first buried in a special chamber of the catacombs of Callistus, a new chamber set aside for the burial of the bishops, but later, after 258, his body was removed from there to make room for the relics of the martyr bishop Xystus II, who was for a long time the object

⁷⁴ Ed. Duchesne, I, p. 141.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

of a special cult in the *crypta papalis* of the catacomb. Zephyrinus's body was then transferred to a tomb in the open cemetery outside the catacomb, but very near to the stairs of its entrance. It remained there probably until the ninth century. The author of the biography of the Liber Pontificalis was ignorant of this translation of Zephyrinus's relics, and thus, while he kept the ancient topographical indication found in the records, "*sepultus est in cymiterio suo*," on the other hand, since he knew that the tomb was outside the catacomb, he added a further indication "*juxta cymiterium Callisti*." If he had known better, he would have said: '*in cymiterio suo, et secundo iuxta cymiterium Callisti*.' This would have afforded the evidence that the catacomb, or at least a part of it, was once called *cymiterium Zephyrini*.⁷⁶

With all due respect to the great De Rossi, it seems to me that even granted the possibility of a removal of Zephyrinus's body from one place to another, the conclusion that the phrase *cymiterio suo* is to be referred to the catacomb of Callistus is unwarranted by the fact that there is no other mention whatever that Zephyrinus was ever buried there or that his name was ever given to the catacomb. The natural explanation of the words *cymiterio suo* is either that the upper cemetery was called by the name of Zephyrinus because he was the most conspicuous person buried there, or that they are to be taken only in the general sense, 'in a place of his own,' as distinct from the *crypta papalis* in which were laid to rest several of his successors. But this question is closely connected with the more general problem of the archaeological evidence concerning the *crypta papalis*.

It seems to me that the real reason which has led archaeologists and historians to discard Victor's name as the founder

⁷⁶ Roma Sott., II, pp. 4-13, 50-51. De Rossi himself, however, presents his theory as a mere hypothesis: "If in the most conspicuous place of the papal sepulchral chamber was laid, as is credible, a pope, I do not see to whom to assign that place better than to Zephyrinus. Perhaps Xystus III decided later to give that place to his famous predecessor Xystus II, and this might have caused the translation of Zephyrinus to the upper chapel. But it is certain that Xystus III in the catalogue put within the *crypta* made no mention of Zephyrinus." In his later pages, however, De Rossi treats the fact of Zephyrinus's first burial in the *crypta* as quite certain, and builds on it the whole theory of the *crypta papalis*.

of the cemetery is the striking fact that at Zephyrinus's death the ancient custom of burying the bishops in the ancient Vatican cemetery near the tomb of Peter was discontinued. The abandonment of this custom is very surprising, for the churches at that time attached great importance not only to the possession of a list of their bishops but also to the assemblage of their tombs in the same place as alike constituting eloquent evidence of legitimate succession and unbroken doctrinal tradition from the early apostles. We do not know the reason which decided or obliged Callistus to assign to Zephyrinus a resting-place far from his predecessors.⁷⁷ Had the Vatican cemetery become incapable of further use? Had it become dangerous for political reasons? Had it fallen under the control of some dissident group? Was this innovation caused by the works executed in the Vatican by Elagabalus to fit the place for special spectacles and games? Had any of these reasons any connection with a possible transfer of Peter's body from the Vatican to the place known as 'ad Catacumbas' on the Appian Way, not far distant from the cemetery of Callistus?⁷⁸ There is no way of finding a definite answer to these questions, but undoubtedly the breach in the old tradition took place in this period.

Was either Zephyrinus or Callistus the founder of the *crypta papalis*? Definite historical evidence is lacking. As we have seen, that Zephyrinus was buried there is a mere supposition, while Callistus was not laid to rest in the cemetery which had been the object of so much care during his twenty-five years' ecclesiastical activity, but in the cemetery of Calepodius on the

⁷⁷ Roma Sott., II, pp. 4-97; DACL. II, 1665, n. 1.

⁷⁸ Any connection between the two events is energetically rejected by De Rossi. The question of the transfer of Peter's and Paul's relics to the place 'Ad Catacumbas' on the Appian Way, has been discussed afresh after the new excavations of recent years in the Basilica of St. Sebastian ad Catacumbas. See bibliography on this question in my article, 'The Tombs of the Apostles ad Catacumbas,' *Harvard Theological Review*, 1921, p. 87, and Lietzmann's article on the same question in the number for April, 1923. For the new excavations of 1921-23, see O. Marucchi in *Nuovo Bull. arch. cris.*, 1921, pp. 3-14; and 1923, pp. 3-27. The further evidence found in these excavations continues to make probable the theory that the transfer really took place, but a definite and final proof is still lacking, and the question of the date still presents serious difficulties. See K. Erbes, 'Die geschichtlichen Verhältnisse der Apostelgräber in Rom,' *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 1924, pp. 38-92.

Aurelian Way.⁷⁹ Very doubtful is also the case of his successor Urbanus.⁸⁰ The first Roman bishop whose tomb was undoubtedly in the crypta was Antheros († 236); a few years later the body of his predecessor Pontianus, brought back from Sardinia, was also buried there. So far the historical evidence.

The archaeological evidence would seem more conclusive. The absence of *arcosolia* in the original cubicles of the crypta has led De Rossi to the conclusion that it was built in the time of Zephyrinus, or at least before the construction of the second and third *areae* of the catacomb. This is possible, though the period in which this archaic form of the cubicles gave way to the more elaborate form of the *arcosolia* cannot be determined with

⁷⁹ This fact that Callistus was not buried in his catacomb nor in the crypta *papalis*, which is supposed to have been already in existence and inaugurated by the tomb of Zephyrinus, has puzzled the archaeologists and historians, who have seen in it "une étrange bizarrerie du sort" (Leclercq, *DACL*, II, 1660). An explanation was sought in the apocryphal *Acta Callixti*, in which it is said that Callistus by order of the Emperor Alexander Severus was stoned to death, thrown in a pit, and then buried by the Christians in the cemetery of Calepodius. Tillemont (*Mémoires*, III, p. 251) suggested that the unusual way in which Callistus was put to death suits better an irregular execution by a mob than a regular trial. De Rossi accepted this suggestion. Duchesne formulated in a more definite way the theory that Callistus was killed by an angry mob, which "détournant les fidèles de Rome de tenter le passage du Tibre et de s'aventurer sur la voie Appienne, les força de s'échapper avec le corps de leur évêque, par la porte la plus voisine du théâtre de sa mort" (*Lib. Pont.*, I, p. xliii). The explanation is ingenious, but is only an hypothesis based on the acceptance of one part of the apocryphal acts and the rejection of the rest.

⁸⁰ The question of Urbanus's resting-place is one of the most complicated in Christian archaeology. The *Liber Pontificalis* and the ancient martyrologies said: "Urbanus sepultus est in cymiterio Praetextati," but the apocryphal *Acta S. Caeciliae* and some manuscripts of the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* said: "in coemeterio Callisti." It seems that in the list of interments in the crypta *papalis* which Xystus III caused to be inscribed on a tablet in the crypta, the name of Urbanus did not appear (*DACL*, II, 1730). The hypothesis of two Urbani, one the bishop of Rome and the other a bishop of some other city who died in Rome on a visit, and of a confusion between them was formulated by De Rossi (*Roma Sott.*, II, pp. 52-54). The discovery of a slab in the crypta *papalis* with the name of Urbanus seems to confirm the statement that the bishop of Rome was buried there. It must be noticed, however, that the name is engraved not on the face of the slab but on one side, and the inscription itself shows a peculiar form of the letter A. De Rossi thinks that these peculiarities confirm the archaic character of the slabs. Others on the contrary think that they show a later period (Wilpert, *Die Papstgräber und die Caeciliengruft*, Freiburg, 1909, p. 17). Authoritative scholars still think that Urbanus was buried in the cemetery of Praetextatus, and that the Urbanus lying in St. Callistus was a later bishop from some other city (Kirsch, *Cath. Encycl.*, XV, p. 209).

precision, and its chronological limits may be stretched several years without much difficulty.

But all this granted, do we find in it any evidence that bears upon the attribution to Zephyrinus and Callistus of the acquisition of the cemetery in the name of the church? None whatever. There is no necessary connection between the two facts, the abandonment of the Vatican cemetery and the acquisition in the name of the church of the cemetery of Callistus. The former was abandoned for serious and impellent reasons unknown to us; the latter was chosen as a new place for the episcopal burials because, belonging to the church, it was a safer place than any other. But that does not prove that the cemetery was secured to the church by Zephyrinus and not by Victor.

What still remains beyond doubt is only the fact that the first works of enlargement and adaptation of the cemetery for the use of a community took place under Victor; and in a question enveloped in so much obscurity this single piece of incontrovertible evidence ought to have a higher value than any learned hypotheses. Now is it probable that Victor undertook the development of the hypogeum of the Caecilii while still, at least in the eyes of the law, the private property of that family, and without having secured direct possession of it? The analysis of the circumstances and of the general situation of the Roman Christian community during the years of Victor's episcopate confirms, if I am right, the conclusions of the archaeological evidence in his favor.

The motives which impelled the Roman Church to adopt a new cemeterial policy are obvious, and were well summarized by Dom Leclercq on the lines traced by De Rossi. The community had grown to such an extent that the ancient small cemeteries owned by private families were insufficient. It was necessary to enlarge them by digging new galleries and sepulchral chambers, and it could not be expected that the owners would themselves undertake such extensive works of construction and the upkeep of such large places. On the other hand, it would have involved great risk for the ecclesiastical administration to take upon itself such an enterprise without possessing a legal title to the cemeteries, since it was always possible that by right of in-

heritance they might fall into the hands of pagan members of the families concerned, be again used as burial places for heathen, and be lost to the church.⁸¹

If these were the reasons which made it urgent for the church to find a new solution of the cemeterial problem, we must say that they are suited to the time of Victor's episcopate. We have already mentioned that the extraordinary growth of the Christian community of Rome took place during the period of peace and tolerance in the reign of Commodus and the first years of Severus. The passage of Eusebius quoted above also states that at that time many members of the aristocracy of Rome were gained for the Christian faith. Thus we find present both the urgent need of the growing community and large possibilities of obtaining the necessary *praedium* for a new cemetery, through increase in the number of wealthy Christian families. If about the year 200 it would have been attended with risk for Zephyrinus and Callistus to undertake extensive works in the catacomb without having first acquired a right of property in the name of the church, would it have been less dangerous for Victor to do the same thing in the year 190? And since there is no doubt that extensive works were carried on in the cemetery under Victor, it is natural to infer that the hypogeum of the Caecilii had already passed under the full control of the Roman bishop.

But there is another reason which has been overlooked by historians, and which, it seems to me, must have played an important part in the adoption of a new program of cemeterial development. The Christian cemeteries, not being the legal property of the church were not under the absolute control of the central government of the bishop. Obviously, in a community divided into so many conflicting groups as was the Roman Church at the end of the second century, a private cemetery was exposed not only to the danger of falling eventually into the hands of a heathen family, but also to that of coming under the control of a dissident group with which the legal owner of the cemetery might have sympathized. And such a danger must have been the more acute that some of the

⁸¹ DACL. II, 2425.

groups, by reason of their philosophical teaching and hellenistic culture, could not fail to attract the favor of Christian members of the upper classes.

The situation must have been serious for a bishop like Victor, who found himself confronted with eight or ten leaders of independent groups all claiming to be the legitimate rulers of the Christian community and the representatives of true Christian tradition. To see any one of the ancient and venerable cemeteries fall into the hands of an heretical group would have been a great misfortune for the Roman bishop. Not only by such an event were the sacred places, where martyrs and confessors were resting in peace, in a way desecrated by the presence of the tombs of heretics, but it would become impossible for the bishop to use the place for the burial of the faithful of his following. For the existence of cemeteries of heretics separate from those of other Christians there is plenty of historical and archaeological evidence from the third century.⁸² But it is plain that even in the second century the heretical and dissident groups must have been confronted with the problem of providing a burial ground for their followers. The need would arise whenever a group was excluded from the communion of the church. It had either to find wealthy members willing to provide new burial grounds for their community, or to gain to its side some family which had already given to the Christians the use of their pri-

⁸² In the third century cemeteries of heretics must have been very numerous. The Novatianists had their own (De Rossi, *Bull. arch. cris.*, 1863, p. 20); the followers of Hippolytus had also their own catacomb, and there his body was buried after it was brought back from Sardinia (Marucchi, *Éléments d'archéologie chrét.*, I, 337; II, 296). The Sabellians had a cemetery in which originally stood the well-known inscription: "Qui et Filius diceris et Pater inveniris" (De Rossi, *Bull.*, 1866, p. 95). De Rossi, however, thinks that it belongs to the fourth century. In 1903 a small cemetery was discovered on the Via Latina which probably belonged to a group of Valentinians and in which probably was originally placed the famous Gnostic inscription for a woman (CIG. IV, 9595a; Marucchi, *Nuovo Bull.*, 1903, pp. 301-314). In 1910 another hypogeum was discovered on the same Via Latina, which is known as the sepulchre of Trebius Justus (Kanzler, *Nuovo Bull.*, 1911, pp. 201-207). From the paintings and the decorations Marucchi concluded that this also belonged to a Gnostic group (*Nuovo Bull.*, 1911, pp. 209-235). On the cemeteries of the heretics in general and their characteristics see De Rossi, *Roma Sott.*, I, pp. 108-109; Marucchi, *N. Bull.*, 1903, p. 304; Leclercq, *DACL.* II, 2383.

vate cemetery. It seems that both possibilities were exploited by the heretics and dissidents.

Of the former solution a new evidence has recently come to light in the hypogeum of the Viale Manzoni discovered in 1919.⁸³ The oldest part of this catacomb is assigned on sound archaeological grounds to the late second century, and an inscription mentioning the "*Liberti Aurelii*" shows that the place originally belonged to some branch of the gens Aurelia. There is no doubt that the development of this catacomb went through the same stages as all other Christian cemeteries of ancient Rome: "to a small and well-decorated funeral chamber belonging to a private family gradually several simple and bare galleries were added for the use of a community."⁸⁴ From the subject and the symbolism of the paintings archaeologists have agreed that this catacomb must have been used by a Christian heretical group, probably a group of Valentinian Gnostics.⁸⁵

More difficult is it to find evidence of the other practical solution of the heretics' problem, that is to say, of the eventual and temporary control of one or another of the ancient Christian cemeteries by some heretical or dissident group. The reasons are obvious. First of all, some of those groups were not heretical but only dissident in the matter of discipline, as was the case with the Asiatics; their funerary symbols and formulae were the same simple generic symbols and the same laconic phrases used by all the Christians. Even the burial places of the heretics rarely betray their heretical character through any peculiar phrase in the inscriptions. Furthermore, in cases in which the heretics during their temporary control of a cata-

⁸³ G. Bendinelli, 'Ipogeo con pitture scoperto presso il Viale Manzoni,' *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1920, pp. 123-141; and 'Nuove scoperte,' *ibid.*, 1921, pp. 230-234.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1920, p. 140.

⁸⁵ O. Marucchi, *Nuovo Bull.*, 1921, pp. 44-47, 83-93; Grossi-Gondi, *Civiltà Cattolica*, Rome, 1921, pp. 2, 127; G. de Jerphanion, 'Les dernières découvertes dans la Rome souterraine, in *Les Études*, 5 Avril 1922, pp. 59-80. In his second article Marucchi very ingeniously interprets the paintings of this hypogeum as representing scenes from the book of Job, which, as is known from Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata*, iv. 12), was used by some Gnostics and especially by Basilides in their effort to solve the obscure problem of evil (*Buonaiuti*, *Gnosticismo*, p. 164). His theory has not been accepted by all (Wilpert, *Jerphanion*), but all agree that this cemetery belonged to heretics, and that it was established in the late second century.

comb used symbols or caused scenes to be painted which could hurt the feelings of orthodox believers, these evidences of their passage were entirely destroyed as soon as the Great Church entered again into possession of the place. For the third century historical evidence is not lacking of heretical attempts to get possession of Christian cemeteries;⁸⁶ it is likely that similar attempts were also made in the second half of the second century, when the cemeterial administration of the church was still on a more uncertain and weaker basis than after the episcopate of Victor.

In view of the general situation of the Christian community it is obvious that during the last decades of the second century the many divisions and conflicts of the various Roman groups must have created an acute problem concerning the Christian cemeteries. And such a problem must have been more urgent and more vital for the large community of which Victor was the recognized and obeyed leader than for many other groups. The dissident and heretical groups were smaller, and their needs were limited: moreover, many of them through their philosophical and mystical theories, which attracted persons of culture, had in their ranks far more members of better social condition than were found in the large humble crowds gathered around Victor. The propaganda of the conflicting groups in the effort to gain followers from the ranks of their competitors was undoubtedly very active and in many cases even unscrupulous, as we find for instance a few years later in the conflict between Hippolytus and Callistus. The possession of a cemetery must have been a great advantage and a good instrument for efficient propaganda.

To the Christians of the poorer classes, as to everyone else at that time, it was of primary concern to secure through a religious affiliation a decent funeral and a burial place after death. It was the common aspiration of all the humble people crowded

⁸⁶ Of the Novatianists it is said that they stole from the cemetery on the Via Salaria the body of St. Silanus and concealed it in their catacomb (De Rossi, *Bull.*, 1863, p. 20). Under the Emperor Maximus two Tertullianists who settled in Rome from Africa were granted a permit to build a 'collegium extra muros urbis,' and they came by force into possession of the tomb of the martyrs Processus and Martinianus, but after the fall of Maximus they were expelled from the place (DACL. II, 2383).

in the capital; the *collegia tenuiorum* were multiplying under the protection of the law, so that there was no group of men belonging to the same trade or profession, or devotees of the same deity, or even united as freedmen and slaves of the same large household, who did not form a collegium in order to escape after death the horrors that the popular tradition assigned to the dead whose bodies lacked funeral honors. The Christian propaganda among the common people of Rome could not ignore this important point, the more so that the Christian belief in the resurrection of the flesh added still more valid reasons for the traditional care of the dead. Nor could this point be ignored by the various Christian groups in their mutual conflicts.

The great bulk of Victor's followers were poor people, and among them, as we have already noticed, were numbers of Africans and Latins. Probably these could not be easily gained by the philosophical theories of the Gnostics, or even by the austerities of the Marcionites, but they might easily be attracted by the promise of the same advantages that the heathen secured through their *collegia tenuiorum*, unless the Great Church could make provision to satisfy this need. The possession of a cemetery which could be developed on a large scale, and on which the bishop could at any time enforce his right of ownership without interference by families or by hostile groups, must have appeared to Victor as necessary and also as a valuable means of keeping the multitudes of his following together.

At this point the obvious suggestion arises that the African origin of Victor, and the large number of African Christians which were to be found in his community, might throw some light on this problem of the acquisition of the hypogeum of the Caecilii for a Christian cemetery. As a matter of fact it seems that the Christian community of Carthage came into possession of the *areae* used as Christian cemeteries either earlier than the Church of Rome or at latest at the same time. The famous passage of the 39th chapter of Tertullian's 'Apologeticus,' in which the characters of the Christian association are described, is the *locus classicus* of De Rossi's argument for his theory that the Christians formed *collegia funeraticia*, and possessed the cemeteries in that capacity. The 'Apologeticus' was un-

doubtedly written during the last months of 197, when Victor was still alive. And since Tertullian speaks of the Christian organization as of something which was not new but already traditional, that would suggest that in Africa the Christian *collegia tenuiorum*, if they ever existed, must have been organized earlier than in Rome.⁸⁷

The objections, however, against such an interpretation of the passage from Tertullian are strong, and the whole theory of the Christian *collegia* rests on doubtful evidence. But that the Christians in Carthage formed an association with special laws, some of which were very similar to those adopted by the funerary associations of the heathen, is admitted; the divergence is only on the question whether they appeared in the eyes of the law as *collegia funeraticia* and as such were recognized by the government, or whether they were simply religious associations which, though forbidden by the law, were left undisturbed, as was often the case with all kinds of illicit associations in periods of tolerance or indifference on the part of the government.

But either as a funerary association or a tolerated religious association, the community of Carthage seems to have possessed the *areae* in its own name. There is no direct evidence for this in the 'Apologeticus,' but such evidence is found in another writing of Tertullian, the epistle 'Ad Scapulam,' written about 212. That the Christians of Carthage could have acquired the property of the *areae* during this interval between 197 and 212 is difficult to admit, since it was a period of persecution, and the violence of the populace against the Christians was such that the Roman governors did not dare even to punish the open violation of the sacred laws which forbade the desecration of cemeteries, irrespective of their owners. The possession of the *areae* by the Christian corporation of Carthage must therefore go

⁸⁷ De Rossi agrees that the appearance of cemeteries owned by the Christian communities is simultaneous in Rome and in Africa. But he naturally assigns them to the period of Zephyrinus: "The first signs of cemeteries belonging to the corporation of the Christians and openly administered in the name of the corporation appear in Rome and in Africa under Zephyrinus" (Roma Sott., II, p. 370). Since, however, his main argument for the existence of such corporations is based on the 39th chapter of the Apologeticus of Tertullian, which was written in 197 before Zephyrinus became bishop, his statement involves a contradiction.

back to the period of Commodus. Was it then the example of the church of his native Africa that persuaded Victor to adopt in Rome the same system which had been successfully carried through in Carthage? Or was it Victor himself who, grasping the opportunity of the indifference of Commodus and the protection of Marcia, first attempted in Rome this radical and much needed provision for the cemeterial administration, and at the same time suggested to his compatriots of Carthage to adopt the same system? Either alternative may be accepted. But the simultaneous establishment of the new system both in Rome and in Carthage through the initiative of Victor, made possible by the temporary peace of the church and easily explained by the close connection between Rome and Carthage and the presence in Rome of a large group of African Christians and a bishop of African origin, seems to be the most satisfactory view of the origin of corporate property in the Christian church.⁸⁸

The last two years of Victor's episcopate were saddened by the outbreak of new persecutions. While Septimius Severus was

⁸⁸ It is interesting to notice that the family of the Caecilii, which granted to Victor the property of their hypogeum on the Appian Way, was one of those families which had branches in Africa. The Caecilii of Cirta were among the most illustrious aristocratic families of Roman Africa. It is true, however, that there is no evidence that Christianity was embraced by any of them before the third century (F. Mesnage, *L'Évangélisation de l'Afrique*, p. 69). In the Octavius of Minucius Felix the pagan opponent is an African Caecilius. F. Mesnage has studied in his work the question of the possible influence of the aristocratic Roman-African families in the development of the African church. More than thirty African bishoprics of the third and fourth centuries were established in places called by the names of those families and belonging to their domain (pp. 1-4). There are traces, however, that Christian members of African aristocratic families may have played a part in the Christian propaganda in Rome. The inscription of Petilius dictated by one Fronto in the catacombs of Callistus (De Rossi, *Roma Sott.*, II, p. 116; Mesnage, pp. 65-68) may offer some suggestions. But the material is here very scanty, and we are too much inclined to speak of Roman influence on Africa rather than vice versa. Thus Dom Leclercq remarks: "Il n'est pas douteux que sa [Victor's] présence à Rome n'ait exercé une influence considérable et définitive sur l'Église d'Afrique. Ce pape latin sut tourner ses compatriotes africains vers le génie latin et la langue latine" (*Afrique chrétienne*, I, p. 93). Without denying the possible influence of Victor on the African church it seems, however, more proper to say that this African Latin pope first turned the hellenistic church of Rome towards the Latin genius and the Latin language.

engaged in the Parthian war, the African Plautianus, who controlled the government in Rome and had no sympathy for the Christians, put an end to the period of benevolent tolerance towards the church. The news of the bloody events and anti-christian riots at Carthage of the year 197 must have dispelled all doubts in Victor's mind as to the hostile policy of the African Roman emperor and of his powerful African lieutenant Plautianus. We like to think that Tertullian's 'Apologeticus,' which must have reached Rome in the early months of 198, filled Victor's heart with hope at a moment when the future appeared so dark for the Christian cause. From his native Africa had come this eloquent defence of the Christian faith and this persuasive exhortation to Christians to cling faithfully to the truth and to the ideals of the church.

That Victor died a martyr is affirmed by pious legends only; it is unlikely, since the persecution in Rome appears to have begun a little later under Zephyrinus, and no trace of the assumed martyrdom of Victor is found in any trustworthy tradition. When he died in 198/9 the situation of the Christian community of Rome was still made difficult by internal conflicts; the problems which he had set himself to solve were still harassing the Great Church. But Victor's determined policy had shown the way; he had effected the final triumph of the monarchical episcopate in the community and had reorganized on a sounder basis the system of ecclesiastical administration. His greatest contribution to the future of the Roman Church, however, lay in his daring to confront in a resolute fashion the problem of the relations among the churches, and in his intimation to the other churches that the authority of the Roman bishop was to be reckoned with in all questions affecting either the doctrinal or the disciplinary tradition of Christianity, since most such questions affected directly the Roman community.

The process of latinization of the Roman Church, so well started at the end of the second century, went on, gradually overcoming all resistance. By the middle of the third century, the time when Christianity in Rome was but a foreign religion had wholly passed. The Latin element had gained full control of the Roman Church. As we have seen, this movement for the

latinization of the church received a great impulse from the African element in Rome. The traditional idea which traces the development of the church as a double line from the East to Rome and from Rome to the East, considering Carthage as a mere appendage of Rome, must be modified in so far it applies to this period. Whatever may have been the Roman contribution to the early expansion of Christianity in Africa, the situation during the last quarter of the second century was certainly changed. Rome was the recipient of influences both from the East and from Africa. The history of the relations between Rome and Carthage in the time of Cyprian, the attitude, at times patronizing and even defiant, that the latter assumed toward the Roman bishops, the eagerness with which the clergy of each city and the conflicting parties in each sought support in the other, all this would find a psychological explanation in the tradition established when the Africans in Rome played an important part in the latinization of the Roman Church.

But Rome was not merely passive; the function of Christian Rome, the great laboratory of Christianity, was to receive from all sides the various constructive and conflicting elements of both thought and institutions, to eliminate all that was not assimilable or not practical in them, to interpenetrate them with its own spirit, and finally to mould all these elements into a consistent whole within the framework of a strong organization. As we noticed above, African Christianity, in striking contrast with the hellenistic churches, shows from the beginning little or no interest in merely speculative problems; emphasis was primarily, if not entirely, concentrated on moral issues and on disciplinary and sacramental implications. If Christianity had been left in the hands of the Africans, this tendency would probably have prevented the development of a well-balanced system of doctrine and in so far as concerned the organization, it would have been unable to go beyond the narrow limits of an archaic ecclesiology. The motto of Tertullian, "*ne ultra regulam*," remarks De Faye, "could never become the flag of the thinkers of Greek origin, readers of Plato and eager to conquer for their faith philosophy itself." On the other hand, the same motto could not have become the flag of the Roman

Church until '*regula*' was understood as meaning tradition in general, or even the obstinate and uncompromising rigorism of Tertullian himself — two conceptions incapable of appealing to the far-seeing Roman mind. *Ne ultra regulam* became the motto of the Roman Church only when Rome identified itself with '*regula*.'

The logical development of African Christianity could but lead to the colorless theology of Cyprian, to his narrow interpretation of sacramental validity, and to his inconsistent ideal of church government, by which he thought it possible to secure both unity and uniformity under the system of episcopal oligarchy. It would have led, as it did, to the paradoxical ecclesiology of the Donatists, and made of Christianity the heritage of a fanatical religious clan. But the same comprehensive and well-balanced Roman spirit which in the Christian community of Rome checked the disintegrating individualism and the unbridled intellectualism of hellenistic Christianity, which would have dissolved the church into the thin air of a vague theology, checked also the spiritual provincialism of the Africans, which would have reduced the church from its universal character and aspirations to a fanatical congregation of beggars.

The historical problem of Christian unity during the first centuries thus receives a great light from the history of the Roman Church. The composite character of the Roman community and the consequent conflicts led that church to adopt a policy which, while aimed primarily at securing unity and order in its internal organization, was at the same time laying the foundations of a new system of hierarchical government for the whole church.

NOTES

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

There is no danger that anyone will overlook the importance of Mr. Bonner's article on the Michigan Papyrus of the Shepherd of Hermas in the number of this REVIEW for April, 1925. The publication of a manuscript of the Shepherd of Hermas dating from the third century will be a real event in the history of the interpretation of early Christian literature. But there is one point in his statement which, though it will appeal at once to those who have worked on the Shepherd, is likely to escape the notice of others unless attention be drawn to it.

Mr. Bonner makes it plain that the Michigan papyrus originally began with what is now called the Fifth Vision of Hermas. Now it is known to students of the Shepherd that commentators have always found difficulty in the fact that the Shepherd himself who gives his name to the whole book, does not appear until exactly this point in the narrative; the first four Visions have nothing whatever to do with the story of the Shepherd. Moreover this exegetical difficulty certainly ought to be combined with the fact that at just this point the text seems unusually confused in the manuscripts which we possess.

The later text, represented by the Athos manuscript, has smoothed this out completely, and calls the Fifth Vision *ὁρασις ε'*, making this title consistent with those of the other Visions, and the same appears to be true of the Ethiopic version; but the Codex Sinaiticus, though it calls the other four Visions *ὁράσεις*, calls this *ἀποκάλυψις ε'*. The second Latin version leaves out this title altogether; it has described the other Visions as *prima, secunda*, etc., but when it reaches the Fifth Vision it inserts *incipiunt pastoris mandata duodecim*, and the first Latin version has *visio quinta, initium pastoris*. In view of the text of the Michigan papyrus, which is at least fifty years earlier than the Codex Sinaiticus and may be earlier than the Latin versions, the question will in future have to be considered whether two books have not been combined into one, the first book having been 'The Visions of Hermas' and the second 'The Shepherd.' The time has scarcely come for a full discussion, but the points of importance in the problem are: (1) a general identity of style runs through both parts of Hermas; (2) quotations appear to be made by Clement

of Alexandria from both parts of the book. It would therefore appear probable that in any case both parts are by the same writer, but in view of the Michigan papyrus it will be hard to deny the probability that in Egypt the 'Shepherd' in the narrower sense had a separate existence from the preceding 'Visions,' and it should be noticed that it is only in the Visions that the evidence for a Roman origin can be found.

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THE NOTICES PREFIXED TO CODEX 773 OF THE GOSPELS

THE note-books of the late Professor Caspar René Gregory were given after his death to the University Library at Leipzig, and are there accessible to scholars; they contain much more information about the manuscripts of the New Testament which he had explored than could be included in the lists of the *Prolegomena* and the *Text-kritik*, and since the task which I have assumed of completing and continuing the list of New Testament manuscripts has given me occasion to examine the note-books, I hope in the future to be able to publish valuable matter from them.

In Note-book H, fol. 6^v, a description is given of Codex 773 (Athens, B. N. 1 [Sakkelion 56]), a Gospel manuscript of the 11th century, and Gregory transcribes what he read on fol. 1^r. In the following copy I have tried to restore what seems to have been the original length of the lines.

I

ΠΡΟΣΦΩΝΗΣΙΣ

κορωνίς εἰμι δογμάτων θείων διδάσκαλος·
 ἂν τινί με χρήσης, ἀντίβιβλον λάμβανε·
 οἱ γὰρ ἀποδότηι κακοί.

᾿ΑΝΤΙΦΩΝΗΣΙΣ

5

θησαυρὸν ἔχων σε πνευματικῶν ἀγαθῶν
 καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ποθητὸν <ἁρμονίαις τε
 καὶ ποικίλαις> γραμμαῖς κεκοσμημένον,
 νῆ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, οὐ δώσω προχείρως τινί,
 οὐδ' αὖ φθονήσω τῆς ὠφελείας,
 χρήσω δὲ τοῖς φίλοις ἀξιόπιστον
 ἀντίβιβλον λαμβάνων.

10

II

ἘΠΙΓΡΑΜΜΑ

ἔλεος καὶ ὑγεία τῷ γράψαντι·
 δόξα καὶ ἔπαινος τῷ κτησαμένῳ·
 σοφία καὶ σύνεσις τοῖς ἀναγινώσκουσιν.

15

III

αὕτη ἡ σεβασμία καὶ θεία βίβλος τῶν εὐαγγελίων ἔχει τετράδας τὰς πάσας
 ἐξ καὶ τριάκοντα χωρὶς τῶν περιφύλλων καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ξύλοις κεκολλημένων,
 ἀνετέθη τῷ ναῷ δὲ τῆς μονῆς τῆς ὑπεραγίας θεοτόκου τοῦ σκουτῆ (?)
 παρὰ τοῦ μοναχοῦ κυρίου Ἰωάννου καὶ συγκέλλου, τοῦ γεγονότος πρωτο-
 σπαθαρίου(?)

20

καὶ πρωτονοταρίου τοῦ δρόμου, ὃν ἀξιώσκει τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ ὁ θεός,
 καὶ τοὺς εὐλαβῶς καὶ πιστῶς ἐντυγχάνοντας τοῖς γεγραμμένοις σώσει ὡς
 ἀγαθὸς καὶ φιλόανθρωπος. ἀμήν.

IV¹

κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Νικολάῳ.
 ὁ ταπεινὸς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς Νικόλαος.

25

5 ἀντίφρασις H 88 6 πνευματικὸν ἀγαθὸν 773; correxi e H 88 7-8 ἀρμονίαι
 τε καὶ ποικιλίαι < 773; addidi e H 88 9 δώσω + σε H 88

This is an interesting little piece, worthy of attention in several aspects. It consists of four parts, not however distinguished from one another in the manuscript. They are as follows:

I. A short dialogue between the book and its owner. The book declares its value, and warns the owner not to lend it to anyone without taking a receipt; 'for those who are bound to return anything are mostly bad.' The owner replies: 'I know thy value, and will not rashly give thee to anyone; yet I would not deprive my friends of advantage from thee; so I will lend thee, taking trustworthy receipt.'

II. Good wishes for writer, owner, and readers.

III. Note on the donation of the book, ending with the usual prayers.

IV. Short invocation, and note of writer (subsequent owner?).

To begin with the last part (IV). We cannot say, without a look at the manuscript itself, whether Nicolaus was the writer himself or a later owner or reader of the book, but I am inclined to see in

¹ I cannot tell whether these last two lines are by the same hand or by a later one.

him the writer, for John, mentioned in the note of donation (III), surely did not write the book himself, but had it written. In that case, the prayers in III and IV are for the benefit of the same triad as the wishes in II — for owner, readers, writer.

In Part III the book is called a 'gospel-book' and described as 'venerable and divine.' Remarkable is the exact statement about the number of quires, a feature not very common, so far as I know, in manuscripts, especially of the eleventh century. The quires are called τετραδες, quaternions, that is quires of four double leaves. Thirty-six of these make a manuscript of 288 leaves. Besides these it is stated that the codex contained περιφύλλα, 'extra leaves,' at the beginning and end, as well as parchment leaves attached to the wooden covers of the binding. The exactness of description is noteworthy, and recalls the Renaissance practice of giving with exactness at the end of each volume of a printed book all the quire numbers, in order that purchaser or binder may satisfy himself that the book is complete.

The note of donation begins with a doubtful word. The usual term is ἀφιερῶθη; but in Gregory's transcript the word here seems to be ἀνεστέθη, which must be a transcriptional error for either ἀνετέθη or ἀνεστάθη. The former is the more probable. It suggests the classical ἀνάθεμα, 'votive offering.' Thus we see a humanistic tendency as well in the language as in the exactness of the statement — but it is Christian humanism, orthodox and pious. The combination is intelligible, for John, who ordered the book written, and gave it as an offering to the church of the Monastery of the most holy Mother of God τοῦ σκουῖρ (probably τοῦ σκουταρίου, a place in or near Constantinople, the name of which still abides in Scutari),² was a monk and prelate, 'syncellus' (that is, a high ecclesiastical official of the immediate circle of the patriarch), who in his earlier life had been a high official of the court, πρωτονοτάριος τοῦ δρόμου, 'secretary of the navy,' with the corresponding rank of a πρωτοσπαθάριος, 'first esquire' of the emperor.³ Like so many of his fellows he abandoned

² The name is derived from 'scutum,' 'shield,' and means the place in the circus where the emperor is proclaimed; Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, *De caerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, ed. Bonn., i. 92, p. 423.

³ The word is not quite certain. Gregory read ^θ and printed (*Prolegomena*, p. 579; *Textkritik*, p. 221) πρωτοθρόνου. But this is an ecclesiastical title (similar to μητροπολίτης) and does not fit with 'protonotarios of the navy.' After the mention of the present ecclesiastical position of John, τοῦ γεγονότος introduces his former worldly dignities. I therefore suggest that πρωτοσπαθάριος was intended; cf. *Const. Porphyrog., De caerimoniis*, ii. 53, p. 788, and Suicer, *Thesaurus ecclesiasticus*, s. v.

political for ecclesiastical life. A pious man but not trained in theology, he addresses his prayer, in simple language, to God, not to the most holy Trinity or to the Logos who came in the flesh; and in his prayer he appeals to God's goodness and love for mankind in a formula for which we might look in the Pastoral Epistles, or equally well in Epictetus. These few lines of the prayer of the monk John, formerly secretary of the navy, make a noteworthy contribution to our knowledge of the Byzantine renaissance in the eleventh century.

Of the little *ἐπίγραμμα* (II) which in three lines at the close of Part I offers good wishes for writer, owner, and readers, we may perhaps say the same. It is an enlarged form of a very common model, of which the shorter form is

ἔλεος τῷ γράψαντι,
σοφία τοῖς ἀναγινώσκουσι,

sometimes with the addition of

χάρις τοῖς ἀκούουσι,
σωτηρία τοῖς κεκτημένοις.⁴

The combinations 'wisdom and understanding' (Col. 1, 9) and 'glory and praise' (Phil. 1, 11) may be called biblical, but 'mercy and health' is a strange mixture of biblical and classical feeling. While Paul says 'grace and peace,' in his way combining the Greek greeting *χαίρειν* with the Jewish *shalom*, *εἰρήνη*, the Pastoral Epistles use the triad, 'grace, mercy, and peace.' For *χαίρειν* Epicurus in his letters used to write *ὑγιαίνειν*. Thus the combination 'mercy and health' is at once monkish and Epicurean.

Now as to the opening dialogue (I). These lines are well known to every New Testament scholar who has studied the 'Euthalian' problem. This *προσφώνησις* and *ἀντιφώνησις* (or *ἀντίφρασις*) are found in the famous Coislin manuscript, Codex H^{Paul}, and its ally the Naples manuscript II. Aa. 7 (Codex 88 in Gregory's list),⁵ and they have been supposed to belong to the 'Euthalian' material, for in these codices they follow the well known subscription, *ἔγραψα καὶ ἐξεθέμην κατὰ δύναμιν στιχηρόν, κτλ. . . . ἀντεβλήθη δὲ ἡ βιβλος πρὸς τὸ ἐν Καισαρείᾳ ἀντίγραφον τῆς βιβλιοθήκης τοῦ ἁγίου Παμφίλου χειρὶ γεγραμ-*

⁴ E. Nestle's *Einführung in das griechische Neue Testament*, Vierte Auflage, 1923, p. 143.

⁵ The sister manuscript Escorial T. III. 12 (Codex 915, Gregory) is defective at this point; cf. H. von Soden, *Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, I, pp. 677 f. Von Soden mentions this *προσφώνησις* three times (pp. 366, 678, 681), and promises to discuss it later on, but seems to have failed to do so.

μένον αὐτοῦ.⁶ On the ground of my own investigations and of von Soden's descriptions, I think it safe to say that there is no other Greek 'Euthalian' manuscript which contains this little dialogue between book and owner;⁷ consequently von Soden is quite justified in denying that it bears any relation to the preceding 'Euthalian' notice.

The new feature presented by Codex 773 is that we have here the same dialogue, but in a gospel manuscript and quite apart from any 'Euthalian' connection. The text in 773 is bad, but that may be due to the negligence of the copyist. That a superior text of the dialogue is furnished by H 88 does not prove that the original place of the dialogue was in the 'Euthalian' (or 'Evagrian') group of material. The declaration of the book, 'I am a crown, a teacher of divine dogmas,' and the owner's response, 'In thee I have a treasure of spiritual good things,' apply to the gospels quite as well as to the Pauline epistles — or rather they apply to the former better than to the latter. My conjecture, then, would be that the dialogue was taken over from a gospel manuscript into the ancestor of that special group of 'Euthalian' manuscripts which is represented by H and 88 and characterized by the name 'Evagrius' instead of 'Euthalius.'

The author of the dialogue had evidently had bad experiences with borrowers, but his kindly spirit was willing to go on lending to his friends — with a proper receipt given. That John the monk and former official, who wishes his scribe mercy and health, should have directed these lines to be written in his gospel-book corresponds well with the picture of him we have tried to draw.

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⁶ This αὐτοῦ, almost illegible in H and lacking in 88, is necessary, for the genitive τοῦ ἀγίου Παμφίλου belongs to βιβλιοθήκη. It is impossible to combine αὐτοῦ with the following word προσφώνησις.

⁷ It is found in a number of Armenian manuscripts; see F. C. Conybeare, *Journal of Philology*, Vol. XXIII, 1895, pp. 243 ff.

NEW PAPYRI CONCERNING INCIDENTS AT ALEXANDRIA

The papyri edited by Bell and Crum in the volume *Jews and Christians in Egypt*¹ are among the most important that have been published. Apart from their palaeographic and diplomatic interest they are of immediate concern to historians of the empire and of the early church.

The document of greatest general interest is a rescript of Claudius to the Alexandrians. It was written in the second year of the emperor's reign in reply to an embassy sent to congratulate the new ruler on his accession, to request certain political favors, and to apologize for recent disturbances between the Jews and other residents of Alexandria.² In connection with the congratulations, the citizens asked permission to dedicate to Claudius a public cultus and to pay him various other marks of respect. As his reply constitutes one of the most important pieces of evidence for the history of the imperial cult, this part of the rescript may be quoted in full:

In the first place I permit you to keep my birthday as a *Dies Augusta* in the manner stated³ in your own proclamation.

I agree to the erection by you in the places specified of the statues of myself and the members of my family; for I see that you have been zealous to establish on every side memorials of your loyalty towards my house.

Of the two golden statues, that of the Pax Augusta Claudiana, made at the suggestion and earnest entreaties of my very good friend Barbillus, was refused by me, as it appears too offensive (*φορτικότερος*) and is to be dedicated to Roma;⁴ the other shall have a place in your processions in the manner you

¹ Jews and Christians in Egypt. The Jewish Troubles in Alexandria and the Athanasian Controversy, illustrated by Texts from Greek Papyri in the British Museum. Edited by H. Idris Bell, O. B. E., M. A., Assistant Keeper in the Department of Manuscripts; with three Coptic Texts, edited by W. E. Crum, M. A. London, 1924.

² These are probably to be identified with troubles referred to by Josephus, *Antiquities*, xix. 278, and were a sequel to the brutal persecution of the Jews under Gaius, of which Philo gives an account in the *Contra Flaccum* and *Legatio ad Gaium*. See Bell, pp. 16 ff.

³ De Sanctis emends *προέλησθαι*, 'stated', to *προήρησθαι*, 'requested'; cf. G. De Sanctis, 'Claudio e i Giudei d' Alessandria,' *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica*, December 1924.

⁴ De Sanctis takes this passage somewhat differently from Bell. Instead of supplying *ἐν* before *ἐν* in l. 37 he suggests *ὡς*, so that the text reads: *ὡσεὶ Ῥώμης ἀνατεθήσεται*. He also construes the sentence so that Barbillus is made responsible not for making the statue but for the suggestion that it be dedicated as a statue of Rome instead of to the emperor. "Nè del resto capisco bene come ἐπὶ Ῥώμης ἀνατεθήσεται possa voler dire

think best on name-days (*ταῖς ἐπονύμαις ἡμέραις*); and with it let there be also a throne adorned with whatever decoration you wish.

It would perhaps be foolish, while accepting so great honors to refuse to introduce a Claudian tribe and sanction sacred precincts (*ἄλση*) for each nome of Egypt;⁵ wherefore I permit you both to take these measures and, if you wish,⁶ to set up also the equestrian statues of Vitrasius Pollio, my procurator.⁷

To the erection of four-horse chariots which you desire to establish in my honor at the entrances into the country I give my consent; one to be at the place called Taposiris in Libya, one at Pharos in Alexandria, the third at Pelusium in Egypt.

I deprecate, however, the appointment of a high-priest (*ἀρχιερέα*) to me and the erection of temples, for I do not wish to be offensive to my contemporaries, and I hold that sacred fanes (*τὰ ἱερά*) and the like have by all ages been attributed only to the gods as peculiar honors.

From the start it was difficult to distinguish sharply between religious and political elements in the imperial cult, and it is evident that Claudius felt this difficulty in dealing with the Alexandrians' requests. From their point of view the emperor's reply must have seemed strangely inconsistent. Worship of the living ruler had been rooted in Egyptian tradition for centuries, and furthermore the planting of groves, the erection of statues, and their use in festival processions were in such a connection quite definitely religious observances. The answer of Claudius becomes intelligible only when it is seen that it was written with Roman, not Alexandrian, sensibilities in mind. In line 49 *τοῖς κατ' ἐμαυτὸν*⁸ may be translated 'my followers,' not 'my con-

in greco, 'sarà dedicata a Roma'; e non vedo neppure perchè l'imperatore s'indugi a dire che la statua alla Pace Augusta Claudiana fu fatta per la istante richiesta del pregiatissimo Barbillo proprio nel momento in cui respinge la statua stessa come poco conveniente. Intende invece che la statua, fatta per rappresentare la Pace Augusta Claudiana, sarà per suggestione e istante richiesta del pregiatissimo Barbillo all'imperatore, il quale voleva, rifiutarla, dedicata invece come statua di Roma," op. cit., p. 476.

⁵ De Sanctis (p. 478) reads *κατὰ νόμον* and translates, 'according to the Egyptian custom (secondo l'uso egiziano),' which avoids the difficulty felt by Bell (p. 33, n. 42) in supposing that the Alexandrians had authority for planting such groves in the *χώρα*.

⁶ De Sanctis (pp. 476-477) reads *ἢ δὲ βούλεσθε* for *εἰ δὲ βούλεσθαι*, understanding that the emperor leaves the Alexandrians free to arrange the location and manner of dedication as they wish.

⁷ This Vitrasius Pollio was undoubtedly the one mentioned by Pliny (H. n. xxxvi. 57) but whether he is to be identified with the prefect of Egypt of that name (39-41 A.D.) is doubtful. It is also not clear whether the statues represented Pollio or were made under his direction and represented Claudius. See Bell, p. 33, note on l. 43, and De Sanctis, p. 477.

⁸ *οὔτε φορτικὸς τοῖς κατ' ἐμαυτὸν ἀνθρώποις βουλόμενος.*

temporaries,' and must refer to the Roman and not the Alexandrian public. How little such caution was needed for the latter is shown in the superscription, where the emperor's own representative in publishing the edict refers to τὴν μεγαλιότητα τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν Καίσαρος. It is likely that the sentiments which a few years later inspired Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* were already aroused at Rome and that Claudius felt the necessity of controlling the imperial cult with special caution.

With regard to the Jews the attitude of the emperor shows two things: (1) that he granted them religious toleration and insisted that others should not trouble them or interfere with their religious customs and practices; (2) that he did not consider them to be citizens of Alexandria.⁹ This last point is particularly important, as it settles a long critical controversy and determines the interpretation of the texts in Philo and Josephus relating to Jewish citizenship.

Of more interest to the church historian is the collection of Greek and Coptic documents which Bell discusses under the heading, 'The Meletian Schism.' As much of the interest of these letters depends on their connection with the Meletians it will be well to begin with the letter from which that connection has been inferred.¹⁰ It is written by a certain Callistus to two priests, Παῖεου and Patabeit, describing the difficulties which beset him and his co-religionists and the troubles they have recently had with the authorities. The author refers to an unfortunate event that occurred one night in the house of Heraclitus, the recorder, and which was already known to his correspondents, and he proceeds to relate its sequel. Isaac, the bishop of Letopolis, came to Heraiscus at Alexandria and desired to have dinner in the camp with the bishop. Prominent members of the Athanasian party, however, learned of the meeting, and with a band of drunken soldiers came to capture the bishop and some of the brethren, so that the latter were saved only by the intervention of friendly soldiers in the camp, who hid them in the cellar. Annoyed at the failure of their expedition, the Athanasians and their confederates departed, but met four of the brethren coming toward the camp, whom they maltreated and wounded and put out of Nicopolis. On their return to Alexandria they put up at a hostel by the Gate of the Sun

⁹ καὶ Ἰουδαίους δὲ ἄντικρυς κελεύει μηδὲν πλήρῳ ὢν πρότερον ἔσχον περιεργάζεσθαι μηδὲ ὥσπερ ἐν δυσεὶ πόλεσιν κατοικοῦντας δύο πρεσβείας ἐκπέμπειν τοῦ λοιποῦ, ὃ μὴ πρότερόν ποτε ἐπράκθη, μηδὲ ἐπισπαίρειν γυμνασιαρχικοῖς ἢ κοσμητικοῖς ἀγῶσει, καρπουμένους μὲν τὰ οἰκία ἀπολάοντας δὲ ἐν ἀλλοτρίᾳ πόλει περιουσίας ἀπάντων ἀγαθῶν.

¹⁰ No. 1914. Bell, pp. 53 ff.

where the brethren were accustomed to stay; five of these they discovered there and brought back to camp, detaining them until the arrival of the praepositus. When, toward morning, that official appeared, he and the scribe ordered the brethren to be put out of Nicopolis. The keeper of the hostel, Heraclides, who had apparently been arrested at the same time, was bound and maltreated, and the praepositus asked him, 'Why did you let the monks of the Meletian party (τοὺς μοναχοὺς τῶν Μελετιανῶν) into the hostel?' Another brother, Ammon, who also received the brethren, they imprisoned in the camp (where he was discovered) and forbade him to receive monks in his house in the future (παρήγγιλαν δὲ αὐτοῦ, ὥστε μὴ ὑποδέχεσθαι αὐτὸν μοναχοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ). On top of all these afflictions Callistus and his friends are prevented from going to see Father (πάπαν) Heraiscus. Daylight and reflection apparently raised doubt in the praepositus' mind as to the wisdom or decency of his behavior toward the brethren. Although he was a pagan, he sent that evening a message to the bishop, saying 'I did wrong (ἡμάρτησα) and was drunk in the night that I maltreated the brethren,' and made amends for his behavior. Callistus breaks off at this point and turns to affairs at Alexandria. Athanasius, he says, is greatly depressed, and is consequently causing trouble to Callistus and his friend (καὶ αὐτὸς παρέχει ἡμῖν κάματον) because of writings and reports that are coming to him from outside. Macarius has been discovered at court by the emperor and at his order has been imprisoned. Archelaus and two companions, one of whom was Athanasius, the son of Capito, set out with the hope of rescuing him, but were captured and detained by Apa John at Antioch, because slanderous documents against Heraiscus were found in their possession. All this was very depressing to Athanasius and has made him very uncertain about a journey he had planned to make, and inclined to be vengeful. Already a bishop of the Lower Country has been taken and detained in the Meat Market, a priest has been jailed, and a deacon imprisoned. Even Heraiscus was kept shut up in the camp for a time, but has now been released. Seven other bishops have been exiled.

Meanwhile Callistus and his friends are in want and urge their correspondents to send them bread, as their own supply of wheat bought at extortionate prices is nearly exhausted, and the regular bread supply has not been taken outside on account of the bishop. The letter closes with greetings and a request to get wheat already bought and paid for by Callistus.

Although it is possible to make a tolerably clear summary of the

contents of this document, a careful reading will show that it is full of ambiguities and difficulties. The word ἐπίσκοπος appears several times in the letter, but only in one case is it certain who is intended. The chief cause of confusion on this point lies in ll. 6-8, Ἰσάκ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἀπὸ Λητοῦς ἦλθεν πρὸς Ἡράεισκον ἐν Ἀλεξανδρίᾳ καὶ ἠθέλησεν γεύσασθαι μετὰ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ, which may mean that Heraiscus was the bishop with whom Isaac wished to have dinner or that Heraiscus was the agent through whom the meeting was to be arranged, so that the ἐπίσκοπος is a third and unknown person. This ambiguity is especially unfortunate, as it affects the interpretation of l. 11 where the antecedent of αὐτόν is the ἐπίσκοπος (l. 8) who, with the brethren, was captured by the Athanasians. A similar vagueness attaches to τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ of l. 27, to whom the praepositus sends his apology for maltreating the brethren. Is it Isaac or Heraiscus or the writer's own bishop, whose name was too well known to himself and his readers to require mention? In ll. 49-50 Callistus's lack of bread is attributed to the fact that his visitors left the loaves behind ἵνα διὰ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον μήπως ἕξω ἄρθῃ ἵνα τυρῇ (?) αὐτὰ μετ' αὐτοῦ, but here again it is impossible to identify the bishop. It is fairly plain that the ἐπίσκοπος of ll. 8, 27, and 49 is the same person, but who he was, and what relation he bore to Isaac or Heraiscus, cannot be made out with certainty.

A similar and related problem is the identity of the 'brethren' referred to so often in the course of the letter. It is natural to suppose that they are all co-religionists of Callistus; that all were Meletian monks, as Bell asserts, is extremely doubtful. Ammon, for example, in l. 21 is distinguished from the monks whom he was forbidden to receive,¹¹ and Heraclides, also a brother, was an innkeeper. Therefore only some of the brethren were monks, and among these were the men brought before the praepositus. As the whole temper of the Meletians was puritan and ascetic, it is probable that a sharp line was not drawn between religious and seculars but that each kept as strict a rule as his circumstances and disposition permitted. The life of the Meletians may well have been similar to that of the *bne q'iama* described by Aphraates in his *De Monachis*.¹²

¹¹ καὶ ἄλλον ἀδελφὸν Ἀμμωνα ὄντα ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ καὶ αὐτὸν ὑποδεχόμενον τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς συνέκλισαν ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ, παρήγγιλαν δὲ αὐτοῦ ὥστε μὴ ὑποδέχεσθαι αὐτὸν μοναχοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ.

¹² On the question of the 'bne q'iama,' see the controversy between Burkitt and Connolly in the *Journal of Theological Studies*.

A minor point of interpretation is involved in the description of the *praepositus*' amends. Callistus says ἐποίησεν δὲ καὶ ἀγάπην ἐν ἐκίῳ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ "Ἑλλήν ὦν διὰ τὸ ἀμάρτημα ὃ ἐποίησεν, which Bell translates, 'And that day he had a service said, though he is a Gentile, on account of the sin which he committed.' This is certainly wrong; ποιεῖν ἀγάπην might mean to provide money for an ἀγάπη, a kind of church supper, which may or may not have included the eucharist,¹³ but it is not likely that such a ceremony would be performed with funds provided by a pagan. An alternative meaning is 'to make an offering for charitable purposes,'¹⁴ which would in this case have been a tactful and appropriate reparation for the wrong done to the community in the persons of the brethren. It should be noticed in this connection that the conduct of the *praepositus* was apparently uninfluenced by partisan considerations. In his order to Ammon to admit no monks to his house he does not distinguish between Meletians and Catholics and his sentence on the brethren who are brought to him by the Athanasians and their confederates was that they should be removed from Nicopolis, the town in which the camp was situated. This could hardly have satisfied the Athanasians, who had brought them thither from Alexandria under arrest, presumably in the hope of getting them imprisoned. Furthermore, in spite of his *amende honorable* to the Meletian bishop, the *praepositus* did not revoke his order about the admission of monks into the camp. His attitude in the incident seems to have been exactly that of a sensible pagan who in a period of religious conflict wished to mind his own business and keep clear of the party strife of a religion not his own.

The relative positions of Heraiscus and Callistus present a problem of some difficulty. On the basis of ll. 49–50 Bell supposes that Heraiscus was still in prison and so inaccessible to Callistus, who needed his authority in order to regulate the food-supply. This explanation, however, which fits ll. 49–50 very well, is inconsistent with other portions of the letter. The latter part of line 46, εὐχαριστῶ κτλ.,¹⁵ following immediately on a description of Heraiscus's imprisonment,

¹³ See P. Batiffol, *Études d'histoire et de théologie positive*, Paris, 1902, pp. 277 ff.; H. Leclercq, art. 'Agape,' in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, I, cols. 775 ff.

¹⁴ Synod of Gangres (330 A.D. ?), Canon XI, εἴ τις καταφρονοῖ τῶν ἐκ πίστεως ἀγάπας ποιοῦντων, καὶ διὰ τιμὴν τοῦ κυρίου συγκαλοῦντων τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς, καὶ μὴ ἔθελαι κοινωνεῖν ταῖς κλήσεσι, διὰ τὸ ἐξευτελίζειν τὸ γινόμενον, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω, Hardouin, *Acta Conciliorum*, I, p. 535.

¹⁵ εὐχαριστῶ μὲν τῷ δεσπότῃ θεῷ ὅτι ἐπαύθησαν ἐ πληγαὶ ἃς εἶχεν.

can hardly refer to anything but his release. On the other hand ll. 25–26 make it appear that Callistus and his friends were detained.¹⁶ From ll. 11 ff. it appears that ‘the bishop’ had with him some of the brethren when he went to meet Isaac, and that the friendly soldiers hid them all in the cellar.¹⁷ It seems likely, therefore, that the attempted rescue was unsuccessful, and that Heraiscus was imprisoned for a short time and then released (ll. 45–46), while his companions, including Callistus, were confined for a longer period. Such a view makes the language of l. 25 appropriate, and accounts for the somewhat excessive price paid for grain by Callistus (l. 51), who would have had to make the best bargain he could with his jailers. This view also substantially weakens the case for identifying Heraiscus with ‘the bishop.’ The praepositus would hardly have sent his apology and offering to a man who was at that time serving a sentence which the praepositus himself had pronounced upon him.

In spite of its many obscurities this letter is unquestionably a document of primary importance for the early history of Christianity in Egypt, and church historians will be permanently indebted to its editor, not only for its publication but for the admirable critical notes and introduction that accompany it.

Of the remaining pieces of this collection (1913, 1915–1922) three are written in Coptic, the rest in Greek. With the exception of 1913 and 1921, all are connected by the mention of the same persons, and it is probable that 1921 is written by the Apa Paiëou to whom the others are addressed. With the exception of 1913, these are personal in tone and deal with the homely matters of community life, the exchange of goods, small items of news, and requests for prayers, and thus furnish interesting illustrative material for the comparison of Meletian with Catholic community-life.

No. 1913 stands on a different footing from the rest of the collection, and is connected with them only by the name of a place, not by allusions to the same persons. It is a contract between a priest, Aurelius Pageus of Hipponon and the priors of a monastery called Hathor in the Upper Cynopolite nome. Pageus had been summoned as a witness to Caesarea in a case of ecclesiastical discipline, the nature of

¹⁶ ἐπιλοιπούμεθα οὖν ὅτι οὐκ ἐπιτρέπουσιν ἡμῖν πρὸς τὸν πάπαν Ἡράεισκον ἀπελθῖν καὶ ἐπισκέψασθαι αὐτόν.

¹⁷ ἀκούσαντες οὖν τινες στρατιῶται οἱ ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ καὶ φόβον θεοῦ ἔχοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ἦρκαν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔκρυψαν ἐν ταῖς κέλλαις ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ.

which is not clear from the context, but which Bell believes to be the synod held at Caesarea shortly before the council of Tyre to examine charges brought against Athanasius. The contract specifies a transfer from Pageus to his brother Gerontius of the title to certain administrative duties connected with the monastery. It is enjoined that Gerontius should follow the precedent of his brother in all respects and institute no innovations except with the express command of the priors.

The chief value of the contract is the light it throws on the organization of monasticism at this period and its connection with the synod of Caesarea. The first point is the less important, as the text is so corrupt that it is impossible to make out with certainty the nature and extent of Gerontius's duties. With regard to the second, the contract supplies the date, March 19 (?), 334, at which time the imperial letters summoning the witnesses to the synod had been received. This confirms the date assigned to the Council of Caesarea by the kephalaia of Athanasius' festal letters, and turns the scale against Schwartz's arguments¹⁸ in favor of Sozomen's idea that an interval of thirty months elapsed between Caesarea and Tyre.

The third section of the book deals with the correspondence of Paphnutius. The letters relate to personal matters, and usually contain requests for prayers and spiritual advice. They furnish interesting illustrative material of the kind so abundantly supplied in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*. The most interesting one (1929) is a letter containing a request for prayer from a certain Athanasius. Bell states the case in favor of identifying this Athanasius with the bishop of Alexandria, but this is not very convincing. The similarity of names counts for little, and nothing in the letter can be connected with any known circumstances of Athanasius' life.

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¹⁸ Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, 1911, p. 376, n. 1.